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THE LIFE

OF

ALEXANDER CARSON, LL. D.

BY

GEORGE C. MOORE.

FOURTH EDITION.

NEW YORK:
EDWARD H. FLETCHER.
LONDON: BENJAMIN L. GREEN.

1853.

A.F.



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BANER AND PALMER, STEREOTYERS, NEW YORK.

TO

EDWARD RICHARDSON, Esq., New York,

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE "SEAMAN'S FRIEND SOCIETY," ETC., ETC.,

RESPECTED AND DEAR SIR:

I WOULD do great injustice not only to my own, but also to the feelings of those to whom the Rev. Dr. Carson long ministered—those whom, by your unwearyed exertions, counsel, and “pains-taking philanthropy,” you have largely aided me in removing from distress and landlord oppression to this happy land, if I did not acknowledge the many obligations which both they and I owe to you.

But, sir, in dedicating the Life of Dr. Carson to you, I must say that I do so neither for the purpose of perpetuating your friendship nor of bespeaking your patronage. Your disinterested and uninterrupted attention for the last three years and four months insures the one; and, if needed, your characteristic benevolence would guarantee the other. Soon our official connection shall end; but I trust our fraternal union

DEDICATION.

shall never be dissevered. *May it be as lasting as eternity!*

That your future years may be numerous, and that they may be as happy as many of your past years have been useful, both to the kingdom of Christ and to thousands of the human family—that the blessings of many who were ready to perish may be yours—and that when your earthly pilgrimage terminates, an abundant entrance may be ministered to you into the company of the good and the great—Howard and Wilberforce, Edwards and Payson, Chalmers and Carson, is the prayer of

Your greatly obliged friend,

And attached brother in Christ Jesus,

GEORGE COOKE MOORE.

NEW YORK, Nov. 25th, 1850.

P R E F A C E.

THE following pages contain some plain facts and but few opinions. Even the least hope of popularity has been sacrificed on the shrine of fidelity. *The truth, and as far as it was known, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth,* has been written. As there are many who imagine that *none but a great man* should attempt to chronicle the deeds and sayings of *a great man*, nothing could have induced the writer to undertake the task but a desire to rescue from oblivion incidents which may be useful to the kingdom of Christ.

Critics may criticise as freely as they please, after being told that during the

prosecution of the work the writer has had no time to consult models; that he has been far from his home and library; and that thousands of miles have been traveled on an arduous mission.

Thanks are due to those learned and esteemed friends, the Rev. Drs. Williams and Dowling, for their encouragement, and to Mrs. Hanna, for some of her father's unpublished articles, and for a contribution from her own pen.

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THE
LIFE OF DR. CARSON.

CHAPTER I.

His Birth and pious Presbyterian Mother and Grandmother—Their knowledge of Scripture—His assiduity as a Student—A Successor of Timothy—What his Fellow-Students at Glasgow University thought of him—His superior Scholarship—His Ordination, Settlement, and Marriage—The excellences of his Wife—The Aid she rendered him—His Respect for Female Talent—His Opinion respecting Unholy and Unsuitable Marriages—His Love for, and Attention to, his Wife—Mrs. Carson's Death—His Opinion of Death—His Separation from the Presbyterians—His Prayer—Poetry.

ALEXANDER CARSON, the eldest son of Mr. William Carson, was born near Stewartstown, Tyrone County, North of Ireland, in the year 1776. He died the 24th of August, 1844, in his sixty-eighth year. His ancestors were from Scotland.

When very young, his pious Presbyterian parents devoted him to the service of God, and educated him for the ministry. His mother and grandmother bestowed many prayers and much labor upon him. They could repeat all the Psalms from memory, and they early imbued his mind with the doctrines, precepts, and promises of God's Word. He always

Assiduity as a Student.

acknowledged his obligations to these mothers in Israel, and often besought pious mothers to be faithful to their offspring. He considered himself, though not a believer in apostolic succession, a real, a legitimate successor of the highly-privileged "Timothy." When he furnished religious periodicals with anonymous pieces he often assumed this name.

While a student he was distinguished for his great assiduity. It is said that his father, on one occasion, endeavored, through prudential motives, to divert his attention for a while from his pursuit of knowledge. But such a digression from the path which led to the temple of science the sanguine aspirant could not willingly brook. He wept and entreated until his grandmother interposed her maternal authority. "My son," said the venerable lady to his father, "don't interrupt the boy's studies, for he may yet be a great man in Israel. I believe God has a great work for him to do."

When he went to the University of Glasgow this persevering spirit did not desert him. He often, when preparing to contend for a prize, had one of his fellow-students, who possessed more leisure, to act as his amanuensis, while his emaciated limbs reclined on his couch. Indisposition could not retard his course. His zeal overcame every thing,

His great Scholarship.

except impossibility. His life was frequently considered almost extinct when the terms closed. But the fostering care bestowed upon him during the vacations, in his loved home, always recruited him. His fond mother resorted to means for the restoration of his strength which need not be recorded. So strange and extraordinary did his studious habits appear to many at the University, that they often exclaimed, "Carson is mad ! He is always at the Greek roots." In those days was laid the foundation of his future eminence. But it was *only* the foundation. That he was the greatest proficient within the walls of the college rests on the highest authority. The late Robert Haldane, Esq., in his letters to the Bishop of Salisbury, when comparing Professor Lee, of the renowned University of Cambridge, who was a member of almost all the societies in Europe, with Dr. Carson, as a scholar, says—"In Dr. Carson's hands this redoubtable professor has been sufficiently tame. He saw from Dr. Carson's pamphlets with whom he had to deal. After Dr. Carson's able exposure of his incompetency as a translator there was no bristling up. The professor was made sensible of his inferiority. Nor is this inferiority surprising. The advantages enjoyed by Dr. Carson, who *was the first scholar of his time* at the University of

Ordination and Marriage.

Glasgow, far exceeded those with which Professor Lee was ever favored."

Before he was twenty-two years old, in 1798, he was ordained a Presbyterian minister, settled as a pastor at Tubbermore, and married to Miss Margaret Ledlie, daughter of George Ledlie, Esq., an affluent and highly respectable gentleman. He preached only once to the church before they presented him with a unanimous "call" to become their minister. These things are stated to show that his outset in life was easy and prosperous. And before proceeding, it seems desirable to say that his marriage has always appeared to the writer and others, not only as a singular, but as an extraordinary arrangement of Providence. For if ever a minister of the Gospel was favored with "an help-meet," Dr. Carson was the man. Had Mrs. Carson been merely a pious Christian and a lovable companion, with all his genius and assiduity he would never, nay, he could never, have accomplished what he has.

In addition to an education befitting the companion of the great scholar, she possessed powers of discrimination far superior, not only to the multitude of her own, but even to that of the other sex. And if her judgment did not quadrate with that of her husband, it certainly so far approximated as to

Respect for Female Talent.

enable her to be, in the fields of literature, an assisting handmaid. It is true that some men affect to despise the opinion or the suggestions of females on philosophical or theological subjects. But Dr. Carson repudiated all such *vain* mortals—he never belonged to such a tribe. He considered the mind of woman capable of the widest range and of the most enlarged development. He claimed for her a higher sphere, not only in the moral, but in the intellectual world, than mediocrity. The writer well remembers the apparent pleasure and respect with which he often spoke of the talent and the works of Charlotte Elizabeth and of Hannah More. He very frequently made Mrs. Carson the repository of his thoughts, the nucleus of his arguments, and even his technical vocabulary. When his mind was surcharged, he often whispered, amidst the shades of midnight, “Remember that for me till morning.” It is easy to see that his history can not be written without incorporating some allusions to the companion of his joys and of his sorrows. For, in order that he might be fully devoted to the work of the Lord, she undertook to discharge his most onerous secular duties. She answered nearly all his correspondents. She became the stewardess of his house and the overseer of his farm. She hired, managed, and paid his servants. She

Help rendered him by Mrs. Carson.

received and disbursed his money. For the clothes he wore she honored the merchant's draft, and she paid the tailor's bill. Like the daughters of Milton, she frequently read to him. And when a furious pen deposited his burning thoughts in hieroglyphics, which few mortals could decipher, she became his copyist. How vividly, even now, are both presented to my mind! There they sit, one on either side of the long-frequented hearth, in the time-honored parlor! The great author is, with the speed of light and with the torrent's force, propounding his ideas to the world, while, on the other side, in her old arm-chair, sits his companion with the gracefulness of a queen, and with the gentleness of a seraph, patiently tracing and transcribing the unsightly markings of his wayward pen. How pleasing to the writer, and yet how painful, is the reminiscence!

The writer has made the acquaintance of some men who regard their companions as reason and Scripture dictate, and among the respected few stands prominently the venerated man whose deeds I record. What a loss that his pen has not chronicled the lessons which, throughout his married life, his conjugal demeanor has taught. He was not a husband merely because he was bound by civil or ecclesiastical law; nor, as a matter of self-

His Opinion of Marriage.

ish convenience, to be attended and cared for ; but as one who rejoiced in the bonds wherewith he was bound. Most unfeignedly did he assent to the precept of the apostle—"Let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself;" and, because of the duty inculcated, he often said that "a man ought not to marry any one except he loves her before marriage as fully as he loves himself, lest he should ever afterward be a transgressor." He was not only opposed, *strenuously opposed*, to the alliance of *Christians with the unconverted*, but to that of even believers with believers, except when drawn and held together by the divine and indissoluble bond.

He did not consider it beneath the dignity of a man, nay, of even a great man, to cultivate the social feelings. Nothing, except sheer necessity, could induce him at any time to absent himself from the peaceful hearth which his wife's presence enlivened. And when, as a matter of duty, he visited a family, or a wedding party, neither friendship nor solicitation could constrain him to remain from home after eight o'clock in the evening, when his home chanced to contain Mrs. Carson. But he never counted the hours when she was by his side ; for with her he always felt at home, however far from home. After her lamented

Attention to Mrs. Carson—Opinion of Death.

decease, he told me that when returning from England and Scotland he always felt feverish with anxiety, if she did not accompany him, when he approached his residence, lest he should find her indisposed. The first question he asked, when the door opened, was, if met by a servant, "How is your mistress?" and if received by one of his children, "How is your mother?" He loved his children very much, and although it is customary to return the greetings of those who first accost us, still he always transferred his first greetings to one who was dearer to him than even his children. And when she was removed to the spirit-land he mourned her exit as a dove pines after its mate. Frequently, and with great emphasis, he disclaimed the sentiment of those who denominate "the last enemy" by the endearing name of friend. "What!" he exclaimed, "call death a friend! No, no, death is the friend neither of saint nor sinner. As well might we call the murderer, or the man who comes at midnight to assassinate us, our friend, as to apply the term to that inexorable enemy of our race!"

When chided by a friend for mentioning the name of his departed spouse, his response was, "Sir, do you wish me never to mention the name of her I loved! I mean to talk of her as long as I

Grief after Mrs. Carson's Death.

live! Would that her tomb were in my garden, that I might visit it every day! For, although it is wrong to mourn on account of our friends when they are taken to heaven, still it is not sinful to weep for ourselves." It may be truly said that,

"When such friends part,
'Tis the survivor *dies!*"

He often, after Mrs. Carson's death, ascended a hill which overlooked her grave. The writer frequently accompanied him, and on one occasion endeavored to divert his attention by introducing a subject which at another time, or another place, would have been absorbing. It was an entire failure, for he seemed altogether unconscious of my presence and of my theme. And when I ventured to remonstrate, by saying, "Doctor, I fear grief will be injurious to your health," he turned his mild eyes upon me, and said, "Oh, Mr. Moore, if it were only a staff with which a man walked for forty-two years, if it fell into a river, would he not risk almost his life, to get it out!" In about six months afterward he followed her to glory.

In the foregoing, a part of his history has, for the sake of order and to avoid repetition, been epitomized and transposed. His marriage and the demise of Mrs. Carson have been grouped. But, in

His change of Sentiment.

order to trace his checkered and eventful pilgrimage, it is necessary to see him quietly and comfortably settled as the pastor of a Presbyterian congregation at Tubbermore, enjoying a befitting subsistence, when his views of church government merged into Congregationalism. He had a weak and an increasing family to support. The denomination to which he was about to be united was, in that country, at that time, weak and despised. But either his conscience, or the support afforded by the government, the “*regium donum*,” had to be sacrificed. What a crisis! Poverty and the alienation of friends and relatives loomed within sight of the place and the day of his abjuration. However improbable, it was not impossible for his devoted companion to murmur; and, perchance, his children, through his abandoning the church of his fathers, might be reduced to penury. How natural the forebodings—how trying and painful the luxation! But no forebodings, however gloomy, nor poverty, nor alienation, nor contempt, could stifle his convictions. With him neither fame nor affluence could prove a counterpoise for consistency. The elements scowled, and all creation betokened a coming storm; yet, with strong faith and a fixed purpose, he launched his inexperienced bark. The winds and the waves might assail her,

Last Sermon as a Presbyterian.

but, being imperishable, he knew she could never founder.

On the last Sabbath in which he preached in the capacity of a Presbyterian, he delivered a dispassionate discourse, and, instead of denouncing the church of his pious ancestors, he besought the congregation to be deliberate and prayerful, and not to follow him, but to search the Word of God. After having stated his convictions, with tears he bade them a final adieu! His potent arguments were felt; for as soon as he descended from the pulpit, one of the most influential members seized the Bible, and exclaimed, "Let all who are for God and the Bible follow me!" With the Bible in his hands he retreated to the green sward which surrounded the meeting-house, and thither about two thirds of the congregation followed him. The man who gave up all for Christ was not doomed to be deserted. But those who rallied around him were poor. From that day to the end of his career Dr. Carson never received above one hundred and fifty dollars, and at times not above one hundred per annum. But that he might preach the gospel unshackled by worldly trammels, he hired a farm and betook him to husbandry. Let others calculate how much* "this great light of Israel"

* Haynes' Baptist Cyclopædia, article "Carson," page 150.

His Prayer.

sacrificed in forty years to maintain a good conscience!

Here I insert with great pleasure a prayer written by him at this critical period, which, above every thing that has, or can be written, develops his character. And I must add, that never has there been a prayer more fully answered. It is dated

“TUBBERMORE, Jan. 1st, 1805.

“To commence the drawing up of my reasons to-day, O my Father, give me understanding and penetration to discern the truth, and faith to follow it! While I am engaged in Thy work, as I can not have any interest to serve by it but Thy glory, may I be led and enlightened by Thy Spirit. Give me strength of mind and body, with industry, to accomplish it. Give me perspicacity to detect the fallacy of the reasoning of those who oppose the truth, and vigor of mind, with a ready invention, to refute them in the most convincing and perspicuous manner.

“Give me a clear conception of the subject, with an extensive knowledge of the arguments on both sides. Give me patience and coolness to investigate, and a spirit of meekness to instruct those who oppose themselves. Preserve me from a wrathful spirit when speaking of the worst of Thy ene-

His Prayer.

mies, ‘knowing that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.’ While I candidly declare my opinion with respect to the General Synod, let me always recollect who made me to differ. Let my design be, not to injure those who will injure me, but to gain them. O Lord, make my testimony effectual. As I give up all for Christ, may I have the satisfaction to be the instrument of turning many, to righteousness. May this testimony be the means, not only in bringing the saints in this island to a nearer conformity to Thy Word, but also of exciting many to inquiry, and finally of bringing thousands to Christ.

“As I go out like Abraham, not knowing whither I go, may the blessing of Abraham come upon me. Not only let my natural offspring be Thine to the remotest generation, but my spiritual seed be as numerous as the sand of the sea, or the stars that can not be numbered. Scan out my future lot, and fix the bounds of my habitation. Give me faith to adopt and live upon the sixth of Matthew.

“May I with confidence and cheerfulness trust myself, my wife, and little ones to Thy providence. Lord, I am blind, go before me, lead me by the hand; let me never take a step without Thee. Let me do nothing rashly. And as the tempter will be likely to take advantage of my situation to ex-

His Prayer.

cite me to distrust, O do Thou stand upon my right hand and upon my left, behind and before, so that I may not be moved ! Lord, I know I will not be able to stand one blast if Thou dost not prop. I am the weakest of the weak. I know that by faith only I can stand. O Lord ! Thou seest that my strength is in Thee. I trust not in myself, and vain is the help of man ! Thou alone art my refuge. Forget not my dear wife and helpless babes. Will the Lord, who feedeth the ravens, and clothed the lilies of the field, forget the family of his servant, who gives up all for the name of Christ ? Lord, I know Thou never wilt ; but as distrust will, nevertheless, unavoidably arise if Thou leavest me, O keep possession of my heart, and daily give me heavenly bread for my daily wants ! Let my strength be as my day of trial. Make Thy grace sufficient for me ; perfect Thy strength in my weakness. O Lord, I know of all men I am naturally the most unfit for the perilous work to which Thou has called me. I have not fortitude, nor sufficient self-denial, to fit me to encounter the obloquy, the reproach, and persecution that I shall meet. I have not sufficient front and firmness to separate individually between saints and sinners in the formation of a church. But especially I am not able to withstand the remonstrances of my re-

His Prayer.

lations who are concerned for my temporal welfare. O thou Father of Lights, from whom doth proceed every good and perfect gift, give me what Thou seest I want. I take encouragement from Scripture example, when I see that Thou dost choose instruments in themselves the most unfit to do the most important, and arduous, and dangerous work. To wait upon their crucified Lord Thou didst not choose the courageous Peter, but the timid Joseph and Nicodemus—the latter, who out of fear came to Jesus by night—and the other a disciple, but privately, for fear of the Jews. If Thou didst choose these two timid disciples to acknowledge Jesus in a time of the greatest danger, Thou canst give me now the heart of a lion in the time of danger.

“O Lord! do Thou bless my testimony for the conversion of those of my relations who are yet strangers to Thee. ‘I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow for my brethren, my kindred according to the flesh.’ O Thou, my dear Master, make all my kindred Thy servants; let all my relations be related unto Thee in Jesus Christ. O that I may not see on Thy left hand, on that great day, any of those that are dearer to me than life. Lord, hear Thy servant on behalf of his dear rela-

His Prayer.

tions; I entreat Thee, also, to bless my testimony for the conversion of the congregation in which I now labor. O that the Lord may have a church here. O that my labor for these six years past may not be in vain. O Lord, when I view their present state, my mind is gloomy, but help me to leave them with Thee. Are they not Thine? Are not sinners dearer to Thee than to me?

“What is to happen to me in the course of the present year Thou only knowest. I have to wade through deep waters. O Lord, let them not overflow me. Grant that if I live to look over this on the next new year, I may have cause of praise, and more ground for confidence, by seeing Thy hand to have led me when I gave up all. And when all men are against me be Thou my provider, protector, and comforter. If I am provided for in such circumstances, surely I will be excited ever after in bearing testimony to the faithfulness of God, and exhorting others, after my example, to feed upon the sixth of Matthew. I know that all our trials have a wise design. If, then, I shall by this dispensation be better fitted to call others to confidence and trust in God, surely all I suffer will be light in comparison.

“I thank Thee, Lord, for the wife Thou hast given me. I have not to support her, she supports and

Prayer and Verses.

comforts me. Had it been otherwise I know not what I would have done. Hear, Lord, hear in Christ. Amen."

This chapter may well be closed by the verses with which he finished the book, which in his prayer he denominates "Reasons," wherein he has fully shown why he relinquished all things for Christ.

And must I part with all I have,
My dearest Lord, for Thee?
It is but right, since Thou hast done
Much more than this for me.

Yes, let us go! One look from Thee
Will more than make amends
For all the losses I sustain,
Of credit, riches, friends.

Ten thousand worlds, ten thousand lives,
How worthless they appear,
Compared with Thee, supremely good,
Divinely bright and fair!

Saviour of souls! could I from Thee
A single smile obtain,
Though destitute of all things else
I'd glory in my gain!

Deprived of his Meeting-house.

CHAPTER II.

Deprived of his Meeting-house—His Love of Peace—Had to preach in the Fields, etc.—Nine Years without a Place of Worship—Preached thirty Years in an unceiled House—Lady Castle Stewart, and other noble Hearers—He neither sold nor rented Pews—How much he Sacrificed for Consistency—Why he became a Baptist—The Opprobrium incurred—How long he read and thought before he wrote on Baptism—His hatred of Controversy.

IT will be easy to see how much Dr. Carson suffered by his change, when it is told, that although the law awarded the meeting-house to him and to those who followed him, yet that he and his people were excluded by physical force. He was a man of peace. For it he sacrificed every thing except truth and conscience. He assured his church that, except the house could be obtained peaceably, he never would preach within its walls. His people acquiesced. Those from whom they seceded never resigned the house, so, by this sacrifice, he was compelled, for many years, to preach in cold, incommodious barns, and often in the open fields. Here we have a Congregational church formed, but

The House in which he Preached—Lady Castle Stewart.

without a house to screen them from the summer's sun, or to shelter them from the winter's storm.

By a great effort, and after a wearisome period, the church succeeded in erecting a rude fabric, which bears on its front a stone on which is inscribed 1814, the date of their astonishing achievement. It has since been twice enlarged, so as to accommodate the multitudes who went to hear him, by the addition of galleries and a wing. And it may not be uninteresting to state that Dr. Carson continued to preach in that rugged and unceiled house for about thirty years. When he turned his eyes toward the heavens he beheld not a splendid dome, nor a fresco painting, nor even the smooth stucco work of the plasterer—no, but rafts and slates, and glimmerings from the light of day. O ye rough walls and ye unsightly timbers, how highly you have been favored. Seldom have temples of hewn stone and of polished marble been so greatly honored. Yes, in an unfinished house, sounded, for some thirty years, the voice of the most original and profound expositor with which this, or any other age, has been blessed. Yes, and beneath that unsightly roof, and upon uncushioned, and even unpainted seats, often sat Lady Castle Stewart and some of her noble family. Who would have expected to see the carriage of a lord, a great

Why he had not a more commodious Meeting-house.

peer of the realm, drive up to such a conventicle on a Sabbath morning. That house might have exhibited the most unique and magnificent architecture, and it might have been bedecked and adorned by every thing which silver and gold could procure, but if destitute of that daring, instructive voice, such personages would never have crossed its threshold.

Many may be desirous to know why Dr. Carson did not cause his church to borrow, if they could not otherwise obtain, as much money as would have rendered the house more comfortable and attractive. His motto, his universal and invariable motto was, "*Owe no man any thing.*" Therefore he taught that a church ought to be content with a cheap house, even with a temporary shed, if it only comported with their means. He believed that if Christians can not induce sinners to attend "the place where prayer is wont to be made," by the attractions of the Cross, that it is wrong to cajole them hither through the diversified trappings of this world. "Music," says M'Chayne, "will not sanctify, though it makes feminine the heart."

A few months before his death the congregation proposed to improve the meeting-house so as to render it more comfortable for the aged pastor whom they loved, but he would not consent until

He opposed the Selling or Renting of Seats.

the estimated cost was either paid or freely subscribed. And there is an incident connected with the galleries which deserves to be recorded. A gentleman of some wealth and influence, who frequented the house, suggested the propriety of having the cumbrous fixtures removed. The writer demurred, and reported the resolves of the projectors to the Doctor. "What!" said he, "remove or tear down those galleries, which enable so many perishing sinners to hear the gospel every Sabbath! No, never. I got the money which erected them from Mr. Haldane, so I will never consent to have them taken away."

But it may be asked, "Why were the seats not sold, or why were they not rented?" The answer to both questions is, that Dr. Carson condemned the custom by his self-denial. Had he not believed that it has a tendency to beget and foster pride among Christians, by enabling the rich to monopolize the best seats, and that it helps to amalgamate the church with the world, he might, it is presumed, through this medium have realized about a thousand dollars per annum. He considered it not only the privilege, but the duty of every church to support its pastor without taxing the unconverted. By exemplifying his usual consistency—conforming his practice to his faith—his views of this single eccl-

Why he became a Baptist.

siastical law cost him in the course of his ministry, I suppose, not less than *twenty thousand dollars!* If right, how noble! If wrong, how consistent!

Trials do not come alone. This man of God was destined to be again tested. The late storm was but lulled into repose when a northern blast awoke almost a hurricane. The Doctor and his self-denying band of brethren were with amity prosecuting their pilgrimage when the voice of a Scotchman caused many in the camp to stand still. The late excellent Robert Haldane, and his brother, the Rev. James Haldane, having become Baptists, they sent a Baptist missionary to preach in Ireland. This Scotch Baptist disturbed the equanimity of some of Dr. Carson's Pædo-Baptist Congregational church. They visited their pastor, and disclosed not only their convictions, but their determinations. The shepherd was immediately aroused! With eager grasp he clutched the shepherd's crook, determined to slay the invader! "I thought," said he to the writer, a little before his death, "that I could demolish the arguments of that Baptist as easily as you could crush a fly!" He besought his disturbed brethren to be patient, promising that in a few days he would write an article on baptism which would forever silence the Baptists. Accordingly, ever true to his purposes and his promises, he

Why he became a Baptist.

buckled on his rusted armor. Sanguine as to the victory, he seized the sword with which he recently gave battle, fully determined to test his own principles and to expose those of his Baptist opponent. The passages which contain any reference to the ordinance throughout the New Testament were read—the Old Testament was consulted—the Hebrew and the Greek were scrutinized—authors were ransacked, and afterward he wrote during a whole month, when at length he faltered and finally halted, having discovered, as he thought, that his building “rested on a foundation of sand.” On one fatal Saturday evening he cast the manuscript into the fire, and on Sabbath morning, contrary to the wishes of many, and to the expectations of all, he announced himself a convert to the sentiment which he had boldly opposed : he was a Baptist! Well, it was considered bad enough to be a Congregationalist, but to be a Baptist! If the former change was accounted “folly,” the latter, many thought, might well be denominated “madness!” Ever after, one of his dearest and nearest relatives, when he spoke of the Doctor, always prefixed the epithet “simple” to his name.

As an evidence of his calmness and deliberation I would adduce the fact, that instead of publishing his first impressions, when his views on baptism

Deliberation—Hatred of Controversy.

were changed, or of repeating the hackneyed arguments of others, he prosecuted his investigations and matured his thoughts from 1807 till 1831—twenty-four years. The Rev. A. Campbell, President of Bethany College, Virginia, has, in his obituary of Dr. Carson, well remarked, that like Pope he kept his book ten years. But the fact is, that he detained some of his productions three times ten! His ideas on the "*onus probandi*," or *burden of proof*, were familiar to him thirty years before he propounded them to the world in his reply to Archbishop Whately.

The following extract from a letter written by Dr. Carson, on the 13th of December, 1833, to James Buchanan, Esq., late British Consul at New York, will show how little he loved controversy. He says: "I have for several years been engaged in controversy, and I am lately attacked in Ireland. The work to which I allude has no claim to my attention from its arguments, but I think it necessary to expose its weakness, etc.

"Last May I published a work on the Book of Esther, which has had very great success. It has no controversy in it, and the world is willing to read what I write if I could but abstain from controversy. *Indeed, I do not like controversy*, although I have been for a quarter of a century

His hatred of Controversy.

unceasingly engaged in it. But in choosing my labor I do not think myself at liberty to consult my feelings. When Christ says, ‘ Occupy till I come,’ he requires the talents he has given to be employed in the work for which they appear to have been given.”

The Tree under which he Prayed.

CHAPTER III.

His Prayers—The frequency, fervency, solemnity, plainness, brevity, and comprehensiveness of his Prayers—Prayer in Public—The Heathen Nations contrasted with Christian Countries—Prayer necessary to growth in Holiness.

ALL good and great men have been distinguished by their frequent visits to heaven. The patriarchs and the prophets, the apostles, the martyrs, and the reformers, were all men of prayer; and from the hour of his conversion so was Dr. Carson. The old tree, I presume, still survives in one of Erin's green fields, under which the youthful champion poured forth the aspirations of a renewed soul. One of his daughters visited it a few years ago. Who but would repeat the request on behalf of *this* tree, which domestic affection once expressed on the behalf of another—"Woodman, spare that tree!" Prayer became the habitual exercise of this man of God. In fact, it seemed evident, to the writer, that almost every breath he breathed was laden with prayer. For, in addition to the closet, he often, when in the midst of the family circle, uttered,

His Prayers at Midnight.

with closed eyes, the half-suppressed desire. And when he read, or heard of the desolations of Zion, or of the triumphs of sin and of error, he audibly appealed to the throne, apparently unconscious of the presence of any other being than that of an omnipresent Deity.

The writer for some time occupied a room contiguous to his chamber, where he often heard him at midnight wrestling in prayer. O the solemnity of that place, and of those hours ! Though shrouded by darkness, still every thing around appeared as if in the neighborhood of the dazzling—the irradiating throne. The petitioner seemed nearer heaven than did Jacob when honored at Bethel by the visiting angels. To awake, as the writer often did, and listen to the fearless soldier and the indefatigable minister pleading with his God, and craving more grace from his Lord and Master, was, to exclaim with Israel, when he awoke, “This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” Those midnight hours have flown into eternity, and those midnight prayers have been followed by their author into the blissful regions ; but never, never shall the impression made on the mind of the listener pass away ! No, death itself, perhaps, will not be able to obliterate it. It is said that when a member of the Society of Friends saw

His Prayers were Fervent.

Washington on his knees amidst the thick shades of the dense forest, away from the noisy campaign, he predicted his final victory. And who that knows the self-denial, the courage, and the singular holiness of Carson, but will ascribe them to the same source? His great genius and exhaustless stores of learning, instead of rendering him humble, useful, and holy, might have constituted him vain; and have induced him to sacrifice his conscience, so as to secure wealth and popularity.

2. *The fervency of his prayers.*

In all his approaches to the throne he had some definite object in view. And from that object he seemed determined not to be diverted by any circumstance. He pleaded with God as though he himself was not on heaven's footstool, but as if in the audience-chamber on high. It was impossible to listen to his petitions without being persuaded that they were uttered by sincerity. His warm and hearty acknowledgments, his strong and solemn pleadings, together with his humiliating confessions, impersonated both the happy, grateful, pardoned rebel, and the condemned culprit, pleading for his own life and for that of his compeer. Like Moses, he seemed to speak with God. If fervency can betoken sincerity, it was evident that when he drew near to God, his heart was not far from Him.

When Dying had his Hands upheld while Praying.

Still, there was nothing which approached the boisterous, nor was there any vain repetition, nor undue familiarity. His words were well ordered, his attitude was very reverential, and his voice was chastened. Fervency and sincerity were qualities which he respected even when they were allied to ignorance or superstition—when exemplified in a Romanist or a Hindoo. And that which he admired and loved in others, he assiduously cultivated in his communion with God and in his intercourse with man; and this fervency forsook him not in even the hour of death. When in the vestibule of heaven his absorbing anxiety for the kingdom of his Lord caused him to have his hands uplifted, while he besought his Master to reserve the desired rest, and to withhold the promised crown, that he might a little longer rally the soldiers of the Cross, and lead them forth to the high places of the field. During the months which preceded his lamented exit, he often sighed for permission to follow into the spirit-land the partner of his joys and of his sorrows. But, unlike an Elijah or a Jonah, when he beheld error abounding, he prayed fervently that he might be continued as a watchman upon Zion's walls, and be permitted to battle with Zion's enemies.

3. *The solemnity of his prayers.*

All his prayers, both in public and private, were

His Prayers were Solemn and Plain.

expressed very deliberately and gravely. He considered it a breach of decorum and a violation of the law of humility for a creature to approach his Creator vociferously. He thought that God ought to be approached, even through the Lord Jesus our Mediator, with at least as much reverence as we instinctively bear with us into the presence of a king, a queen, a president, or any other august personage. Boisterous and apparently heartless prayers he usually denominated "irreverent and worthless." He often expressed his disapprobation of such prayers by saying that "Those who pray so, seem determined to take heaven by storm." Of his, it may be truly said that they contained nothing of the heterogeneous, or of incoherent rhapsody. When he approached the mercy seat, he always seemed conscious of the deference which is due to the Being before whom even Gabriel vails his face and bows in lowly reverence.

4. His prayers were plain and pointed.

The language through which he presented his supplications was plain and unadorned. He endeavored to avoid using any word which was not familiar to all for whom he interceded. He borrowed no beautiful phrases, nor did he recite any favorite lines from the poets, whom he admired, the sweet singer of Israel excepted. His petitions,

Fine Prayers condemned—Preaching in Prayer.

however, often assumed the beautiful drapery of inspiration. When praying, the language of Scripture seemed to constitute the principal part of his vocabulary. He told me, that when he was at the University of Glasgow, many of his fellow-students "rambled from one meeting-house to another, collecting sheaves of fine prayers," while he spent his leisure hours in the company of Homer and other sages. A beautiful or an elaborated prayer he considered, though pleasing to the fastidious world, offensive both to God and man. His, were never cumbered with either factitious beauties or false blandishments.

All know that there is such a thing often exhibited throughout Christendom as, preaching in prayer. Many, while in the attitude of petitioners, preach to those for whom they pretend to pray. Their hearts are rife with reproof, and they have neither the courage nor the candor to administer it, except by revealing it to God in the presence of those whom they would gladly rebuke. It is a well-known fact that a Northern minister boasted, that when traveling through the Southern states, he usually lectured against slavery in his prayers, "Because," he said, "it is contrary to law to preach against it." I once heard a man invited to pray at the close of an association who had not been asked

Reckless rebuking Prayers.

to share in the other services. He soon showed that he was determined to be revenged. After apparently addressing a few words to the august Being whose mercy, in the name and on behalf of the assembly he was requested to invoke, he commenced with the most awful recklessness to hurl direful javelins amidst the crowd! During twenty-five long minutes he continued with stentorian voice to "reprove, rebuke, and exhort," but without the "all-long-suffering and doctrine!" Nevertheless, both himself and his little party appeared quite pleased; "He did a great work; it was, in their estimation, a noble prayer." Instances might be multiplied to show that this habit is growing into a custom, and arguments might be adduced to prove that it should be avoided by every Christian, and especially, by all ministers. The audience-chamber of heaven can not be the most fitting place for bestowing laudations, or for administering criminations; as all avowedly go there, both to thank and supplicate their God.

It is really questionable whether any man ever felt himself either rebuked or complimented by Dr. Carson's prayers. For although they were direct and pointed, still they were always directed to God instead of his fellow-worshipers. His profound and unbounded reverence for the Being whom he ap-

His Prayers conveyed no Rebukes—Prayer distinct from Thanks.

proached, along with his candor and intrepidity, rendered it utterly impossible for him to abuse the high and sacred privilege. Many, it is true, may have been humbled by his plenary confessions, or gladdened by the expression of his confidence in the mercy and justice and love of the God whom he addressed; but instead of bearing to Heaven's throne the rebukes, the exhortations, or the compliments due to his hearers, he carried thither their transgressions and confessions—their thanksgivings and supplications. With him, every thing was direct; he hated and avoided obliquity. When any needed reproof or instruction, he turned upon such, and with a bland, but fixed countenance, said, “Thou art the man.”

His pre-eminent discrimination, as exemplified in prayer, may be more fully understood by remarking that he not only observed a line of demarkation between praying and preaching, but that he also assigned distinct provinces to prayer and to thanks. For although it is true that during the seasons allotted to prayer he frequently, if not invariably, made an expression of thanks for the mercies received, still it is also true that when he went to the throne laden with thank-offerings he never prayed. This distinction was fully and perceptibly exhibited both at the festive board and at the Lord's table. When

The Brevity and Fullness of his Prayers.

he prayed, he prayed ; when he preached, he preached ; and when he gave thanks, he gave thanks.

5. His prayers were brief and yet comprehensive.

He invariably summoned his family twice every day to the throne of grace ; and it may be well to state, that he never made family worship wearisome to his children by either its prolixity or sameness. After a chapter was read from the Scriptures, he usually spent about one minute and a half, or on some occasions two minutes, on his knees before God. But such a prayer may be considered short by those who spend from five to ten, or fifteen, minutes in the exercise. And others may ask, "How much could such a prayer comprehend ?" But whether, or not, his prayers were not comprehensive, let the following analysis determine. His Lord's injunction, "Use not vain petitions," appeared to govern all his prayers. He began with thanksgiving for recent mercies ; then he invoked both temporal and spiritual blessings, not only upon his own household, but also upon the households of his absent children ; then he presented, with the solicitude of a father, the church of which he was pastor and all their families ; sins of omission, or of commission, were confessed and their pardon was implored ; afterward he besought the blessing of Heaven upon all the churches of Christ in all lands ;

His Public Prayers—Prayer his first Act of Worship.

then he exhibited before the mercy seat the unconverted throughout the world; and finally he presented an earnest appeal for the downfall of anti-christ. Like the blood of the martyrs, which cries daily from beneath the altar, he never forgot "the man of sin."

6. *His prayers in public.*

Prayer was always his first exercise when he met with the church on the Lord's Day. Instead of reading, or singing, he first invoked the aid of the Holy Spirit, and offered thanks in the name of the assembly, and presented all the various supplications which the occasion demanded. And so anxious was he that the whole church should unite with him in this part of the ordinances of God's house, that he usually postponed the service a few minutes after the appointed time if he saw not the wonted number present, as some might have been unavoidably delayed on their journey thither.

Some writers on prayer recommend a daily division, or distribution, of our prayers. They suggest the propriety of appropriating the prayers of Monday for the conversion of the world, the prevalence of freedom, and so forth. They recommend that those of Tuesday be presented on behalf of our country and our rulers; those of Wednesday for the rising generations, colleges and other things;

Heathen and Christian Nations Contrasted.

and so on with all the other days of the week. Such systems may have a show of wisdom, but certainly it can not be right to forget for five days of the week those whom we ought to remember every day at the mercy seat. Those who pray for the conversion of the world on Monday, include the Jews; whereas those who confine their supplications on Saturday to the scattered tribes, overlook all the other perishing millions of the human family. This man's prayers, however, both in the family and the assembly of the saints, embraced them all.

When Homer was read before him, he often remarked to myself and others, how much more assiduously the heathens pray to their gods than Christians do to the God whom they professedly love and obey. "See," he frequently said, "how they present their petitions for success every morning before they enter the battle-field, and how, after they return to the camp, they repair to their altars. If successful, they present a thank-offering; and if vanquished, they make an oblation! If victorious, the victory is ascribed to their gods; and if defeated, their defeat is also charged upon their presiding deity! Professedly Christian nations are not even good heathens!"

He thought that no better service could be rendered the churches of Christ than to array before

Why the Spirit is necessary.

them, by citations from Homer, and other Grecian and Roman authors, the prayerful spirit exemplified by the idolaters of those nations. Had not matters of greater moment, and which required more time and talent, engrossed his attention, or had his life been prolonged, he would have bequeathed such a work to Christendom. Will not some minister who has both learning and leisure supply this deficiency?

7. *He considered prayer essential to growth in holiness, and to a right understanding of the Scriptures.*

There are few passages on which he more frequently descanted than that which embodies one of David's prayers—"Lord, open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

On the necessity of the Spirit's influence he has thus written: "The teaching of the Holy Spirit is necessary, not from the peculiar difficulty of Scripture language, nor from the incomprehensibility of its doctrines, but from the natural blindness of the human mind with respect to spiritual things, and its rooted aversion to the wisdom of God displayed in the plan of salvation."

He often said to me, that the defection of learned men from the truth of God's Word was caused by their self-dependence and by their neglect of prayer. When brooding over the errors of *this age*, he often,

Why Learned Men go Astray.

very often exclaimed, “*They are well kept whom the Lord keeps!*” For when learned men forsake God and depend upon their own judgment, or learning, He gives them up to hardness of heart, and allows them to act like blind horses in a mill!”

Nothing is more indubitably certain than, that when interpreting Scripture he made prayer his chief guide—his primary rule of exegesis. He invented axioms, and classified principles, and traced etymologies, and ransacked glossaries, and compared versions, but after and above all, he trusted more to prayer as a safeguard against error. When defending truth, or exposing sophistry, prayer was to him the locks of Sampson and the staff of David. In fact, it was his right arm, and his bow, and his palladium. Of him it may be truly and emphatically said, that *he lived and died praying!*

CHAPTER IV.

His Knowledge of Popery—His Endeavors to uproot it—His Efforts through the Press—The Conversion of Dr. Doyle—His Lectures on the Revelations—Himself and Family in Danger of being Burned by Night—Protected by Government—His Narrow Escape—The Slayers Slain—Concluding Statements.

DR. CARSON well understood and greatly feared Popery. He failed not to investigate its dark and eventful history, and with sorrowful apprehensions he watched its present and anticipated its future developments. He considered the Romish system the greatest masterpiece of human genius. He believed that a scheme which so nicely blends absurdity and plausibility, self-denial and self-indulgence, wealth and poverty, light and darkness, required a greater effort of mind than did all the sciences extant; and that without the aid of the spirit of darkness it never could have been devised. Those who affect to despise the hoary towers of the moss-covered castle have never examined what skill the architect and builders have displayed. Though

Dr. Carson united with Episcopal Bishops.

parts of the hulk are growing crazy, still it is easy to see that her constructers had perspicacious heads.

It is not necessary to state that Dr. Carson's convictions were developed by his actions. He was not the man to allow the hydra-headed monster to stalk abroad without aiming a shaft at his cumbrous form. Knowing that the baleful system enslaves or annihilates the intellect—imposes spiritual and political despotism, he joined hands with all the Episcopal bishops and other ministers who endeavored to extirpate it. He prepared an article on "The right and duty of all men to read the Scriptures," which he intended to deliver at a meeting convened at Carlow for amicable discussion, by the Romish priests and the Episcopal ministers. The priests, however, incited the mob so that Dr. Carson, and the bishops, and the Protestant clergymen had, in order to escape martyrdom, to flee through a window and scale a wall. Let this tell what Popery will do whenever and wherever it predominates.

He made many successful incursions into the Romish territories. There is evidence that his exposition and condemnation of the pretended miracles of Prince Hohenloe, along with his letters to Lord Plunket on the Cavan reformation, resulted in the conviction and conversion of the Romish pri-

Conversion of Dr. Doyle—Testimony of Dr. Edgar.

mate, Dr. Doyle; one of the most stalwart champions who have defended “the eternal city.” Had not the Jesuits succeeded in suppressing most of the circumstances connected with the glorious event, the world would long since have fully heard that Dr. Doyle, the great advocate of Romanism, renounced the religion of his fathers, and embraced the gospel which Paul taught, and which Carson defended. “The Christian Freeman,” edited by the learned Dr. Edgar, author of “The Variations of Popery,” published, in 1834, some particulars “to establish the belief that Dr. Doyle, for a considerable time before his death, felt the need of a better foundation for acceptance than that which is exhibited by the Church of Rome. It was stated confidently in his own neighborhood, that he refused to allow himself to be anointed. His conversion obtained such general credence in the vicinity of Carlow, that few of the Roman Catholic peasantry attended his funeral. He avowed his exclusive dependence in the merit of the Saviour.”

Dr. Carson’s next effort against “the man of sin,” as he always denominated the Pope, was a treatise on transubstantiation, which, perhaps, embodies as much genius and intellectual strength as any thing which has emanated from his, or any other, pen. This part of the Romish citadel seemed for

He used mild Terms when Exposing Popery.

ages inaccessible, because its bulwarks apparently rested upon a rock. The advocates of transubstantiation pawned all its absurdities on Scripture. But Dr. Carson, like a daring adventurer, avowedly discarded the Bible, and exposed its egregious folly and its monstrous absurdity by the light of science.

Nor were his efforts to subvert Romanism confined to the press ; he laid the pulpit, also, under tribute ; for when expounding God's Word he dispassionately and without either banter or mockery, blazoned its innumerable mazy and deleterious tenets. It may be desirable to state, however, that he approved not the gross terms of censure and crimination generally used by its opponents. He always thought that such modes of procedure, when arrayed against ignorance and superstition, only effected the retardation of truth. The ignorance and the moral enmity of its deluded votaries he endeavored to dissipate and annihilate by the exhibition of gospel light, and of heaven-begotten love. His strong terms and his severe rebukes were reserved for the unshackled sons and daughters of the Reformation. When his fellow-disciples of the Protestant faith diverged from "the old paths," to them, without reserve, he spoke strongly.

As might have been anticipated, his condemnation of Popery, however mild and benevolent in its

The Romanists tried to Burn himself and Family.

bearing, called into requisition the most rancorous enmity of the children of Rome. They went in crowds to his meeting-house when he was expounding "The Revelation;" and, as did the Jews with Paul, some of them bound themselves by the vows of their religion, to exterminate both himself and his family by burning his habitation. But that God who delivered Paul was careful of his life also, and saved him from his enemies. The satanic plot was divulged; some of the murderous conclave were arrested; and, had their intended victim prosecuted them, they would probably have paid the penalty by their lives. But this man of mercy absolutely refused to aid the government in inflicting condign punishment. By exercising mercy he endeavored to overcome evil with good. But, although he entertained no overwhelming fears about the life which he counted not dear to himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, still this bloody disclosure augmented them on behalf of his interesting family. His fidelity to God and his compassion for man subjected not himself only, but also his wife and children, to the possibility of being enveloped in flames, amidst the dreary darkness of some unknown midnight. What an inexpressibly trying and painful anticipation! How depressing

The Privileges of English and American Protestants.

to the heart of a fond husband and of an affectionate father! What though his own body should be consigned to the flames! that, comparatively, would be a trifling sacrifice. His having to die the death of a martyr, might, by the grace of God, result in the conviction and conversion of those who were to kindle his funeral pile! But to brood over the torturing thought of having to consign to death, through the accursed hands of the infuriate vassals of "the man of sin," not one child, but a wife, and sons, and daughters—a whole family! this, this was the trial! this, this was the burden! O ye sons and daughters of Protestant England and America, how difficult it is for you to realize the feelings exercised by that man of God! The fulminations of the Vatican have never reached your privileged homes. The machinations of Jesuits have never caused your hearts to quail or quake. Intimidation and proscription are to you strange words—they have no place in your vocabulary—you, you have always been permitted to worship God beneath your own vines and fig trees, none daring to make you afraid. May it ever be so. Who will say that this man's faith and faithfulness were not fully tested?

And here it may be well to record the fact, that the local government, when apprized of the hazard-

Fears about his Family—Narrow Escape.

ous situation of his family, deputed an officer and some of the local police to guard his home by night. The movements of the officer and his party were, nevertheless, on one occasion tardy: they were unusually late away. The shades, of evening had just superseded the light of day, affording the assassins a safe footpath to the abode of innocence. The kind-hearted father beheld with sorrow the consternation of his timid children. He prayed—he paced the room—he endeavored to penetrate the darkness, so as to catch a glimpse of his protectors—he listened to every passing breeze, so as to hear even the sound of their feet, or the clang of their arms. At length a noise on the premises heralds their approach. Now the anxious father breathes freely—his heart expands—his fears about his terrified family subside, and he sallies forth to welcome his friends at his lawn gate. But, alas! how disappointed! Who now can deliver him! The footsteps are not those of friends, but of his enemies. When within a few paces of those who thirsted for his blood, and when about a hundred yards from his house, who could have predicted his escape! One step in advance might have led to his grave. But, He who formed the tongue caused one of the party to speak audibly to his confederates; just in time to apprise the minister of his impending

The Rage of the Romanists—Power of the Gospel.

danger. He fell flat on the ground, so they saw him not, and passed on to their rendezvous. He fled to his house expecting an immediate invasion, but a signal-shot from the guns of his friends soon dispersed both his fears and his enemies.

On another occasion many of the Romanists entered his meeting-house, armed with clubs and other weapons. Some of his deacons informed him of the fact, and besought him not to preach at that time. "What!" exclaimed the intrepid soldier of the Cross, "ask me through the fear of man to refrain from preaching the gospel! Entreat me not, I beseech you, for I would preach Christ though the wicked of all worlds were marshaled in hostile array before me." Accordingly, in the strength of God, and with a martyr's determination he did preach, and the truth preached through the agency of the Holy Spirit slew many of those who went to slay. Hearts were melted, tears were shed, and the murderous clubs were trampled under foot! The faithless or terrified deacons, after sermon, clustered around the pulpit to congratulate their pastor. "Oh," said Carson, "*the gospel of Jesus can soften the heart even of a tiger!*"

I will close this chapter with a few statements.

1. Dr. Carson feared that Romanism is once more destined to predominate, not only in Ireland,

America the Battle-field of Freedom—Dr. Dowling's Testimony.

but even in England and the other Protestant nations of Europe.

2. He freely avowed his opinion that America is to be the great battle-field on which “the man of sin” is to be conquered. Land of the Puritans, art thou equal to the task and worthy of the trust? Shouldst thou prove recreant when tested, shame, and thralldom, and death await thee.

3. He manifested great sorrow when he read or heard of the emigration of priests, and nuns, and bishops to America from Italy, France, and Ireland. Often, with clenched hands and uplifted eyes, he wafted his forebodings to heaven, by exclaiming, “O Lord! they are about to take the whole world from us.” And frequently he has, with a sorrowful countenance, looked upon the writer, and said, “In order to get rid of Popery we must go to heaven. For even America will not long be an asylum for us. In fact, if we go down to the antipodes, the priests, and nuns, and Jesuits are there before us.” On this point I gladly insert the concurrent testimony of my learned and respected friend Dr. Dowling, who, in his “History of Romanism” says, “There can be no doubt that the Pope and his adherents have formed the deliberate design of obtaining the ascendancy in the United States. Popish priests and editors make no

His Fears, Predictions, and Inculcations.

secret of this design, and expect its realization at no distant day."

Dr. Carson was not a prophet, but, from his knowledge of Scripture and the signs of the times, he was far from agreeing with those who predict the sudden and the peaceful downfall of spiritual Babylon. Instead of believing that Popery is waning, he thought that in every land it is waxing strong and fearful. He considered the marauding giant old enough to totter, or topple, into his grave; but he believed, notwithstanding, that even in the paroxysms of death "the man of sin" will, Sampson-like, have a violent conflict with his enemies. In fact, he thought it neither impossible nor improbable that many of those to whom he preached, would, at no distant period, behold the relentless persecutor dealing misery and destruction throughout Christendom. Who that has heard, can ever forget the stentorian voice with which he animated those whom he warned of the approaching enemy! Its ardent tones were burdened with inculcations to faithfulness and with the most sanguine assurance of victory. When auguring those days of darkness and nights of tempest, he frequently exclaimed, "Soldiers of the Cross, be strong! stand firmly, endure patiently, contend for the faith, and victory, eternal victory, shall be yours!"

Warning and Exhortation.

Let God's people ponder this momentous subject. Let not the proclivity of truckling demagogues, nor the lethargic productions of a venal press, nor the dreamy visions which emanate from many pulpits, lull their suspicions or paralyze their efforts. This is not the fitting time to cry "Peace;" for he who often shed the blood of the martyrs, the weapons of whose warfare have always been carnal, is marshaling his bloody hosts. May God forfend the evil and postpone the day. But let those who dread no war, except "a war of words," be warned by the recent bombardment of Rome and by the massacre of the Romans. If tyranny spare not its own refractory children, how can its implacable enemies hope to escape! Awake, ye sons and daughters of Zion! Rally around the Cross! Arise in the might of God and battle with anti-christ! Truth is mighty and it must prevail. "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." Let all who deprecate the thought of being compelled to see their offspring enthralled, the sun of Righteousness extinguished, and our common faith subverted, be diligent and prayerful. Woe, unmingled woe, shall be the inheritance of those whose apathy may force them to chant the obsequies of Protestantism! May, therefore, the spirit which once animated Luther and Calvin,

Warning and Exhortation.

Wickliff and Cranmer, Knox, Williams and Carson, render us all worthy of finally uniting with the ransomed of the Lord, in singing over his grave the tyrant's death-song—"Fallen, fallen, is Babylon the great."

Words substituted for Thoughts.

CHAPTER V.

Preliminary Remarks—Dr. Carson's Style of Preaching—
When, where, and how he prepared his Sermons—His three
Departments of Labor : Recapitulation, Teaching, Preaching.

PUBLIC men must be characterized by something. The mere paraphernalia of office, except when brought to bear upon superstition, enthusiasm, or genuine piety, will not long secure the attention or the respect of the multitude. Those in office, whether at the bar, the senate, or the pulpit, must, in order to secure an existence, continue to amuse, astonish, or edify. Consequently, those who can not abound in rich or rare thoughts, are constrained to make a full display of mellifluous and heterogeneous words ; and to bedeck their meager ideas with gorgeous figures, or to present them dexterously in the language of trope, metaphor, or of sparkling antithesis. It is to be lamented that the most difficult, as well as the most rare and precious acquirements are least admired or appreciated by the multitude. When great and original thoughts are presented, they resemble exquisite paintings ;

Language of the Parlor most suitable for the Pulpit.

the untutored beholders can neither descry nor appreciate the design of the author. The intricate is so much eclipsed by the chaste and the simple, that the merest tyro considers himself equal to the task of such productions; whereas, a labored collocation of words artistically arranged never fails to surprise and gratify the crowd.

It may be considered superfluous to inform those who are conversant with the writings of Dr. Carson, that *real* taste distinguished all his pulpit and platform exercises. But that which this “incomparable philologist” considered befitting the ministrations of the pulpit, was not the elaborated, the unique, or the brilliant. The language of the parlor and of the drawing-room, he thought the most suitable for the ministers and the habitants of Zion. He considered it more pedantic and offensive to use a strange word, or a labored sentence, in a pulpit, than even in a drawing-room. “Because,” as he often said, “those who deserve a seat in a drawing-room, are expected to understand the language of pedants, whereas many of those who surround the pulpit in every land possess but a limited vocabulary.”

As a preacher, this man attained a singular position. He stood exactly between pedantry and vulgarity. His ardent desire to instruct and save

Simplicity distinguishes Scholars—Pedantry Rebuked.

the ignorant, together with the sensibility which always characterizes the *true* scholar, preserved his ministrations from the fanciful and the pompous; while his thorough knowledge of the language he spoke kept him infinitely removed from vulgar phrases and obsolete terms. It is easy for a speaker to place himself among the vulgar; and it is not difficult to reach the ranks of the pedantic; but to aspire to the point which separates both parties, is, notwithstanding its not being praised by the motley crowd, neither an easy task, nor a common acquirement. “By virtue of their confidence in the feeling or thought to be presented,” says Tuckerman, “men of real taste are ever true to simplicity.” When enforcing upon those whom he trained for the ministry, the duty of using plain language and lucid arguments, Dr. Carson frequently referred to the obnoxious pedantry of a young minister who interlarded his sermons with such unintelligible words as “multum.” “Be careful,” he often said, ironically, “when you preach, lest you forget or omit multum! If you wish to be popular you must speak so as not to be understood.” For such vain, versatile, and erratic preachers he entertained the most unbounded pity. Poetry, with all its charms, he usually discarded and condemned as the materials of discourse. He frequently said to his pupils,

The Lady and her Grandiloquent Minister.

“Once a quarter will be often enough to have poetry in your sermons.” He considered it, except on extraordinary occasions, too precise, labored, and formal for the pulpit. Nothing is more certain than that he fully exemplified that which he so ardently inculcated. The simplicity of his style not only disappointed, but astonished many. An aged lady journeyed many a mile to hear him preach; but she could not long conceal her disappointment; for, when leaving the meeting-house, with the most supercilious airs she asked some of the Doctor’s congregation, “Is that the great Carson? Why, my own minister is by far a greater man, for I understood every word which Carson spoke, but as for my own minister, I can not understand five words of any sermon he ever preaches!” Yes, although Dr. Carson could preach in Greek as fluently as her grandiloquent minister could in English, yet, because she could never understand him, he was “by far a greater man!” What a rule by which to measure the learning and talent of ministers! Had this woman heard the Apostle Paul, whose speech was styled “contemptible,” she would, no doubt, have placed him in the scale of greatness, not only beneath her minister, but below even Carson himself!

But notwithstanding the plainness and simplicity

The Importance of knowing Greek and Hebrew.

of Dr. Carson's style, yet he strongly urged upon young preachers the imperative duty of a careful and prayerful preparation for the pulpit. His repeated advice to his pupils was, "Be always *prepared* to preach; and always have for each occasion double as much matter as may be sufficient; so that if, through excitement, or timidity, you should forget a part, still you may have enough." And he frequently urged the great importance of being familiar with the original of the Scriptures. "The knowledge of Greek and Hebrew," he often said to the writer, "is of infinite importance to ministers of the gospel, because Atheists, Unitarians, and Roman Catholics will not argue from a translation. Should you quote a text from the English version to support an argument, the enemies of truth will triumphantly exclaim, 'That is a wrong translation!' So that if you are not capable of arguing from the original, you will be confounded. And although he who is constantly tampering with the good English Bible is but a bungling workman, still I would strongly advise you never to preach from a text until you have first examined it in the original. The knowledge of Latin and other languages is of little importance to an interpreter compared with those in which

When, where, and how he prepared his Sermons.

God has spoken to man. *Make them the objects of study throughout life.*"

1. *Before stating the more important particulars of Dr. Carson's preaching, it may be well to make known when he prepared and how he delivered his sermons.*

I discovered, by careful observation, that he commenced earlier in the week when the subject of his exposition required deeper research than when it was less abstruse. He gave what was due to every thing. With him there was no procrastination—no postponing till the last hour. He spent a part of the evening of each of the last three or four days of the week, and the whole of Sabbath morning, in preparing for the pulpit. No one, however, except those who were conversant with his movements, could ascertain what he was studying, because he did it in the midst of his family. Scott, his favorite commentator, might be seen occasionally in his hands ; and he often consulted the Hebrew text, the Septuagint, and the good old English Bible. He usually walked unaccompanied to the meeting-house on Sabbath, that his meditations might not be disturbed, and that his communings with Heaven might not be interrupted. The time squandered by many in preparing *how* to preach, he assiduously husbanded in preparing *what*

His Opinion of Written and Read Sermons.

to preach. In his latter years he did not use the pen. The whole process of preparation was mental. He was able to think into form and shape the most profound and complicated subjects. He infringed none of the laws of rhetoric. He respected grammar and pronunciation, brevity, accuracy, and variety ; nay, more, he considered the resources of the sacred orator so unlimited, that himself, when his themes admitted, or demanded, unreservedly used, for illustration and confirmation, figures the most forcible and striking. But he justified, neither by precept nor by practice, the amalgamation of writing and speaking. "When a speaker," he said, "employs the stilted style of a writer, he, in my opinion, ceases to be a speaker. Whether a preacher writes, memorizes, and recites, or writes and reads, he sacrifices the character of an orator ; because the language of a written oration, or discourse, is almost as different from that of an oral production as is one language from another. For a speaker who voluntarily becomes fettered by the rules of writing, I can entertain no other feeling than that of pity. The man who can not communicate his thoughts without writing and reading them, must have *greatly mistaken* his calling."

It is said that the Waverly novels presented to the mind of Wilberforce the trifling, if not ludi-

Words not substituted for Ideas—Preaching.

erous picture of “a giant cracking nuts;” but while a person listened to Dr. Carson, it was difficult to avoid imagining a giant uprooting trees, or leveling hills. Instead of being amused, or delighted, by his language, it was impossible not to feel astonished and edified by the originality, power, and pungency of his ideas. He unvailed that which was hidden—unraveled that which was involved—demolished the unfounded—enforced the plain, and exploded the absurd. Words, with him, were of no moment, except as they subserved these purposes. Instead of mere words, he presented thoughts. His opinions were never poised in the regions of fancy; his hearers were never hauled “from Dan to Beersheba;” the words that burn, without “the thoughts that breathe,” were never his servants. In fact, Paul and the second chapter of 1st Corinthians seemed always before his eyes.

2. Now, having stated a few things concerning the manner of his preaching, the duty remains of making some remarks on the matter of his discourses.

Preaching and teaching, although very frequently confounded by the good men who translated our Bible, Dr. Carson, as will be hereafter shown, separated both in principle and practice. He considered them perfectly distinct. In order to form an accurate

Retrospection: when Diffuse, when Precise.

idea of his ministerial labors, they must be classified under three compartments. On Sabbath morning, after prayer and singing, he began the labors of the day by recapitulation. After the example of the Apostle Peter, he recalled the things which his people had learned, lest at any time they should let them slip. And his retrospection tended, not only to resuscitate the memorative faculty, along with having served as an appropriate caption, or exordium, to his discourse, but it was often a focus in which he concentrated many scattered rays. No man, perhaps, whether ancient or modern, could present his thoughts more succinctly; and yet, when teaching, in order to be understood, he endeavored to be diffuse, if not exuberant. But when he wished his hearers to remember that which they had learned, he was sententious and axiomatic. He dashed off the foliage and lopped off the branches, that the trunk of the stately tree might stand before the eye unshrouded. He well knew when to be diffuse and when precise—when to employ the abstract and when the concrete. While thus employed, he often reminded his hearers of one who, when presenting that which he wished indelibly impressed on the beholders, instead of exhibiting it by a taper-light, holds it high amidst the translucent blaze of the mid-day sun. When, by retrospection, he trav-

What he effected by Recapitulation—Opinion of Sermonizing.

ersed the field of observation a second time, incurably blind and intellectually stolid must have been those whom he led, if they failed to descry, or ceased to remember, the road and all its way-marks. During this performance all his powers seemed to culminate, and in it he was always consistent; he contradicted not to-day that which he taught yesterday. When husbanding the vintage, he usually carried all in his grasp; but when he gleaned a *second* time, nothing eluded his gaze. By retrospection he added brilliancy to light, made deep impressions still deeper, and stamped with perpetuity the knowledge already imparted. I frequently thought that the Doctor had preached a good sermon before he opened the Bible.

3. *His next department of labor was teaching.*

In obedience to the divine injunction, he endeavored to increase the knowledge of his people every time they convened. He considered the man who knows most of God as being, in the highest sense, the greatest man on earth. And in his judgment, the way to indoctrinate a church is, not by selecting a word, a verse, or an isolated sentence for the contemplation of the people, but by expounding to them the entire Bible. Sermonizing he sometimes denominated “child’s play”—“walking on crutches!” and the justly renowned Robert Hall,

Robert Hall's Opinion—Difficulties of Exposition.

I believe, was of the same opinion. It is true, nevertheless, that Dr. Carson, as well as Mr. Hall, often sermonized. When from home, he usually adopted that mode of presenting divine truth; and throughout the summer season he frequently, in the afternoon, spoke from a verse. Exposition, however, was his strong forte. There are many still living who listened to his definitions and illustrations of the types, sacrifices, and prophecies—the doctrines, ordinances, promises, and duties contained in every chapter and verse within both Testaments. He made Genesis his starting point, and the book of Revelations his goal. It may be well to remark, however, that when he labored in the fields of the Old Testament in the morning, he generally expounded, or preached from, the New Testament in the afternoon. According to the standard which this man recognized and obeyed, the duties of a bishop are any thing but trifling. Every tyro can declaim, or dole out some meager metaphysical or moral disquisitions; but the man who essays to surmount all the difficulties, and to remove all the obstructions, which beset the pathway of the expositor, requires great grace, much knowledge, and inexhaustible patience. The prospective, forces one to exclaim, “Who is sufficient for these things?” In fulfilling this part of his ministerial office, Dr.

Teaching tested his Strength—The Skeptic.

Carson had full scope for the exercise of his intellectual and spiritual strength. His genius, however transcendent, his talent, however great, and his learning, however limitless, were all—all in the work of interpretation—not only tasked, but fully tested. History—ancient and modern, ecclesiastical and civil—rhetoric, logic and philology, hermeneutics and philosophy, were all—all rendered tributary.

Some may fancy that this manner of teaching must be wearisome and tends to cloy the appetite of hearers. But such is not the case. It is impossible to convey an impression of the anxiety manifested when this expositor approached a passage of doubtful or of difficult interpretation. The writer well remembers having, with many others, realized this feeling, when the Doctor, in his expository course, neared the gulf in which so many infidels have foundered—the nineteenth verse of the first chapter of Judges. “I defy,” said a skeptical hearer, “all the Carsons in the world to explain or justify that verse.” The doubts of the unbeliever were noised abroad—all was anxiety and suspense, until the hour arrived when David met Goliah. At length the Bible was opened, the chapter was read, verse after verse was dispatched, but when the point was reached, many bated their breath, and

How he achieved the Victory—His Pulpit Criticism.

the house seemed vocal with such mental interrogatives as, "Will he be able to reconcile it?" or, "Will he obviate the difficulty by passing over it?" The painful sensation, however, lived only an instant; for as the strong man breasts the tide and defies the torrent, so this man used no quirks—with him there was no equivocation or hesitancy. He struck only one dextrous blow, when infidelity lay dead! And the Christian champion achieved the victory without blustering, and with so much facility, and it was so complete, the only matter of surprise was, that all had not previously, as if by intuition, known the explication. He invariably made truth so plain and error so glaring, that it was impossible not to say, "Why did I not know that before?" Dr. Carson could not avoid being a critic in the pulpit as well as when at the desk; but his criticisms were not pedantic or jejune, such as disgust or set hearers asleep. No, while he spoke all kept vigil. I do not remember having seen an individual even nod, although his expositions extended from an hour to two, and sometimes to even three hours. Good and full sermons when he spoke from a *text*, were sometimes delivered *within thirty minutes*.

4. *He preached.*

He was never satisfied to bestow all his strength

How Sinners felt under his Preaching—His Appeals.

on saints—sinners invariably received their portion. He always appeared very desirous to enlist others under the banner of his King. His knowledge of human depravity enabled him to depict it in all its varied phases, and to exhibit its turpitude in a manner that might have caused its possessors to blush! And although his discourses were neither interlaced nor interlarded with names, or sects, or insinuations, yet many of the unconverted were often cut to the heart, because he so depicted their very souls that they thought he aimed all at them. For the last few years of his life there was a refined gentleman in the neighborhood who could not sit under his preaching. Mrs. Carson and others visited, expostulated with, and endeavored to persuade him that Dr. Carson was not at all personal. But all efforts were unavailing, for every time he ventured within the precincts of the pulpit, he always retired with increased umbrage.

All defaulters, and hypocrites, and wrong-doers had to sit on hard seats, and to endure chilling winds when he preached. While denouncing the wrath of God upon unbelief and all unrighteousness, he was indescribably awful. Every declaration was a manifesto, and every entreaty seemed a mandamus from the throne of the Almighty. He endeavored to scathe the impenitent with heaven's

How he governed his Audience—He restrained his Feelings.

lightning; but he left them not long to quake in the vicinity of Sinai. No; Calvary and its Cross, and its omnipotent Saviour, constituted the refuge city to which he directed the perishing. Truly, the Cross was his Polar Star—Calvary was his much-loved home!

As before shown, his great endeavor was to instruct, and he may be more appropriately termed a teacher than a preacher. He aimed more at the conscience and the judgment than at the feelings. Motive, well-directed and firmly grounded motive, was his lever. He seldom governed his audience by impulse. He never knit his brow or clenched his hand, or stamped with his feet to beget the real by the feigned. He brought not from their graves the urns of those who were endeared to his hearers. The momentous themes on which he discoursed, the terrific, the tragical, and the consoling, often begat fire in his bones and tears in his eyes, but, except on extraordinary occasions, he extinguished the fire, and chased the tears back to their fountains. This the writer often deplored. He did it, no doubt, to avoid even the semblance of the affectation and low artifice in which too many abound. He restrained with giant strength the most spontaneous feelings, and seldom or never indulged any of the passions. The sermons of his

Discourse on Mrs. Carson's Death—Jubilee Sermon.

son, the late Dr. George Carson, who was a surgeon and a preacher, often caused him to weep. When he stood over the bier of that son he said, "There lies the only man I have ever heard whose sermons could make my tears flow." When Mrs. Carson was laid in her "long home," he seemed determined to improve before the congregation the afflictive event, but lest his feelings should interdict his wishes, he asked one of his pupils, who occasionally preached for him, to be prepared for the emergency. The teacher and the pupil went equipped to the meeting-house. The sad yet submissive husband, notwithstanding his bereavement, ascended the pulpit; he touched the sensitive chord lightly until he alluded to his own bereavement; but his stentorian voice faltered as he said, "All the storms which have visited us were light and easily borne compared with this hurricane! Beloved brethren, this awful thunder-clap has almost laid me prostrate!" Strong as he was, this tender allusion laid him on his seat; but it was for an instant only, just while he heaved a convulsive sigh!

The Doctor was invited by the London Baptist ministers to preach a sermon on the jubilee of the mission, which was devised by the revered Fuller and the holy Pearce, and commenced by the immortal Carey; and he was informed that it would

His spontaneous Exposition.

be necessary to have his sermon sent to London before he himself started for the great metropolis. The request amused him. While writing it he remarked, with much pleasantry, "What a strange thing it is to have a sermon printed before it is preached!" Of that sermon, which he afterward delivered in the pulpit of the renowned Rowland Hill, I will only say that he preached a better one, without either writing or much premeditation, in his own rough old pulpit on the Sabbath previous to his departure for England. Having announced a jubilee celebration at home, so that his church and congregation might send a thank-offering by his hand to the jubilee fund, many, as might have been expected, traveled ten, and some even twenty miles, to participate the joyous occasion. He, however, purposed to expound as usual, and allow a minister from England, and other ministers who were present, to talk about the jubilee in the afternoon. Having failed to induce him to gratify the wishes of the anxious crowd, I went to a gentleman who could persuade his pastor to do almost any thing, and got him to urge the request, even when the Doctor was seated in the pulpit. I knew that his only written sermon was in London, and that his thoughts were fixed on another subject; he was about to tread his beaten pathway, and yet

The overwhelming Effects of his Oratory.

I hoped that the judgment of Mr. Joshua Adams, his judicious adviser, would demand attention. The application was untimely, but having been told that the people came to hear *him*, it was successful. After prayer and singing, the New Testament was opened instead of the Old, which he was consecutively expounding. He made the parables recorded in the 13th chapter of Matthew, 33, 44, 45, and 46th verses the foundation of his discourse. The arguments, the illustrations, and the diction employed soon made it apparent that nothing but emergency could develop the strength of the great man. It required the knowledge accumulated during fifty years to have produced that exposition. Its originality, majesty, and eloquence are almost inconceivable. If producing conviction, instruction, and persuasion constitute an orator, then this man was always an orator; but when on this occasion he delineated the future triumphs of the gospel—when the little leaven shall have leavened “the whole lump”—when the handful of corn on the top of the mountain shall shake like the trees of Lebanon—then all the nations of the earth seemed transformed into the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. Would that that sermon could have been preserved! The writer recorded some of its thoughts; but when the preacher whirled his

Described as a Preacher by the London Primitive Church Magazine.

hearers into the chariot of salvation, and brought them to view the prospective glories of Zion, notes, and pencils, and paper were all thrown away and forgotten! The picture presented nothing somber, sad, or awful, and yet very many wept as if for the death of their first-born. His depiction of the millennial kingdom of the Lord Jesus was so brilliant, so dazzling, so exhilarating that even one look at it was too much for the weak vision of poor mortality.

But, that my readers may know what others thought of his preaching, I will here make a brief quotation. In the Primitive Church Magazine, of London, for 1844, it is said that "His (Dr. Carson's) *preaching* was characterized by great originality. He possessed the secret of making every subject interesting. There was a great variety in all his addresses. His chief glory, however, was the gospel theme. Here he shone out in full luster—here all the powers of his mighty mind found ample scope—his manly eloquence was at home. His heart was riveted to the Cross. His constant motto was, 'Only Jesus will I know, and Jesus crucified.' From parts, to many the most barren, he could bring out the most interesting matter. In his hands the Scriptures proved themselves indeed to be 'living oracles.' None ever listened

The Deathbed—Why he exhibited Christ.

to him ungratified. Strangers who, from report, had formed high expectations, having heard him for themselves, have often exclaimed, ‘The half of the fame thereof was not told us’—such a torrent of magic thought would be poured forth in a style of burning, blazing, volcanic eloquence!’

Having accompanied Dr. Carson to the deathbed of an aged sinner, who, but a few days previously, had obtained pardon and peace through the Saviour whom the Doctor exhibited, when we left the house, with great emphasis and ecstasy he said to me, “That man’s experience ought to be told to the world. Poor man! he was all his life traveling the road to hell, until he heard of the love of Jesus and of His power to save; now, he is going to heaven! Nothing but the gospel will do sinners good! Oh, Mr. Moore, preach the gospel, and nothing but the gospel!”

Instead of merely saying, “Sinner, believe on the Lord Jesus,” or, “Come to Jesus,” he exhibited Christ in all His power, and loveliness, and majesty; so that the sinner might be *constrained* to trust, love, and adore Him. Exhorting an unbeliever to believe, without presenting tangible evidence to his understanding, or beseeching a sinner to love the Lord Jesus, without presenting Christ’s claims on his affections, he considered as no better

Advice to Pupils—He continually exhibited Christ.

than useless. Every sermon he preached was like a Briareus, with a hundred hands, directing sinners to the Saviour. When instructing his pupils, on this momentous subject, he often said—"The mere name of Jesus can convey no saving, or transforming, charm! It is through the manifestation of the work which He accomplished—of the mercy, the love, and the compassion which Christ exercised—that the Holy Spirit begets faith and love in the minds and hearts of the unconverted."

But it may be asked whether Dr. Carson practiced that which he enforced. "Did he always digress from his logical course, when expounding difficult passages, so as to preach Christ on every occasion?" Those who heard him for above forty years, testify that he never dismissed a congregation without having presented as much of Christ as would save, or condemn. He never pacified his conscience by using the trite exhortation—"Sinner, come to Christ." No; Christ and His Cross and His salvation pervaded his every thought and sentiment. By them, he enforced every duty; upon them, he based every promise and grounded every hope. Without Christ, he could say nothing—do nothing! Christ was his ever-present King to govern—his Prophet to instruct—his Priest to sanctify—his Sacrifice to save. Without Christ, he considered exposition, and

Christ, his Theme through Life and Hope in Death.

exhortation, and declamation unprofitable jargon. He preached Christ from the law, as well as from the gospel. He found Him everywhere, and presented Him on all occasions. His soul seemed to glow—to expand—in fact, to have enjoyed some of the prelibations of the upper world—when he directed the gaze of the sin-stricken to the Cross. He brought the Cross, and its power, and its triumphs down to the confines of the regions of darkness. And when he had heaven, with its resplendent glory, placed in proximity with hell, he held out to repentant sinners, *even there*, not only God's mercy, but the right arm of God's justice, as a guarantee of their salvation. The gospel which he preached was so full and so perfect that it enabled him to extend the hope of eternal life to the most abandoned, even when they were entering the caverns of the dead—when in the vestibule of the eternal prison-house! The Saviour whom he preached was a victorious, a compassionate, an almighty Saviour! Christ was his theme through life and his hope in death. Some of his last words were—“My dear Lord Jesus, my loved Lord, come to me! Come, dear Lord, pity thy poor servant! Come and help me, my gracious Lord!”

CHAPTER VI.

Letter from Rev. Alexander Macleod, of Glasgow, on Dr. Carson's Views of Church Order—Extract from Dr. Carson's Letter to British Consul Buchanan, on this Subject: his View of 1 Tim. ii. 1, and of 1 Cor. xiv. 16—The washing of Feet not binding—Love-feasts Unscriptural—Met as a Church in 1807—Zeal for the increase of Devotedness to the Service of Christ greater Proof of growth in the Divine Life than Zeal for the Purity of Ordinances—The Order of the Exercises in the Church at Tubbermore.

IT is needless to comment on the following abridged letter, addressed, in 1844, to the Primitive Church Magazine of London, by the Rev. Alexander Macleod, of Glasgow, a brother, whose distinguished zeal and talent are manifest in his excellent treatise on “Unfulfilled Prophecy.”

“Mr. Jones (author of “Ecclesiastical History,” etc.), whom we all esteem as an able writer and zealous defender of truth, has claimed Dr. Carson for the Scotch Baptists; others, I apprehend, will put in their claim in the strong language of the men of Israel, who said to their brethren, ‘We have more right in David than ye have.’

Dr. Carson belonged to no Party—His Letter.

Dr. Carson did, in some things, agree with the Scotch Baptists, in several he differed from them. It is certain he never joined them. His conduct in England is sufficiently known; his name, then, can not be fairly made *a peg*, on which to hang the crotchets of either Scotch or English Baptists. The Doctor's own language has ever been '*Search the Scriptures*,' and '*Call no man Father*.' 'Inspired men only are infallible!' Both his writings and example are well fitted to counteract the evil spirit of party, and to bring the scattered followers of Christ to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God. A. MACLEOD."

On this subject Dr. Carson will be allowed to speak for himself. The extract which I submit to my readers is from an unpublished letter written by him, in the name of the church at Tubbermore, in 1819, and addressed through James Buchanan, Esq., late British consul, to some persons who had written to him and his people from New York city.

"With respect to the ordinances which you observe on the first day of the week, we agree with you in general; but with respect to the order of observing these ordinances, we find but little fixed in the New Testament. The only thing we can, with any confidence, say we have learned on this subject is, that at whatever time a church meets to

His View of the Lord's Supper and 1 Tim. ii. 1.

observe the institution of the first day of the week, the Lord's Supper ought to hold a distinguished place. But how often we ought to sing or pray, or whether we should pray or sing first, we find nothing fixed. Though we should have no objection with you to commence with prayer, yet we could not say that we consider ourselves bound to this order by 1 Tim. ii. 1. Prayer for our civil governors we consider an important duty, but the above passage does not appear to determine the time of it. 'First of all' appears to us to refer to the order in which the apostle brought forward the subjects of exhortation. He had been speaking of his own deplorably wicked character, and from the abounding mercy of God to him he concludes that they ought not to despair of any man's salvation. Therefore prayers, etc., ought to be made even for pagan and persecuting rulers—for the grace that saved Saul of Tarsus was able to save the vilest of them. 'I exhort, then, first of all, that prayers,' etc. The second thing he exhorted to, was the deportment of women. From this he passed to the qualifications of bishops.

"This, dear brethren, is our view, which we do not obtrude upon you, but as you have invited our faithfulness, we suggest to your consideration; should we at any time perceive your view to be just,

Washing of Feet and Love-feasts not Ordinances.

we shall most promptly adopt it. We conceive that whatever Christ has not fixed must be left free forever, and that a church, though it may usually preserve the same order, has no right to bind itself to this when Christ's authority is not interposed. In the house of God there is no discretionary authority, not in the least degree.

'We consider 1 Cor. 14-16 to warrant us to subjoin an 'amen' to prayer. The washing of feet we do not consider an ordinance, but the selection of one of the most humiliating offices, to inculcate the practice of all when the brethren need them. It has not to us the least appearance of being enjoined to be observed in form.

"A love-feast, as an ordinance, we consider as unscriptural. The passages that speak of it we view as referring to the Lord's Supper. Is any feast so much a feast of love as this? Besides, we are forbidden to eat in the church for the gratification of appetite. But what surprises us most, is the ground on which you hold it. You consider it not of strict obligation, and therefore sometimes omit it. We think this inconsistent. If Christ has instituted a love-feast, it must be strictly obligatory, and if He has not, you will have no praise from Him in observing it in His name, though ever so seldom. We see nothing to prevent the wealthy

Zeal for Ordinances not the best Evidence of Religion.

brethren from entertaining the church in their own houses, but we should beware of adding to the institutions of Christ.

" We met as a church in May, 1807. There never was any schismatic separation from us, but on account of convenience two churches have gone out from us !

" We consider the presbytery an ordinance of God, as soon as practicable, though we have now but one elder.

" Dear brethren, we have observed with very great delight the ardent spirit of love which your communication breathes toward the people of God, and your zeal for the increase of devotedness to the service of Christ. This, to us, is greater proof of growth in the divine life than zeal, even for the purity of ordinances. Some of late make a great noise about the corruptions of other churches, and exert themselves much in vindicating Scriptural order, who do not appear to have in an equal degree bowels of love to all the people of God and concern for the salvation of sinners. The one ought to be done, but the other ought not to be left undone !

" We love to see Christians fully awake and waiting for the coming of their Lord. We love to see His servants girding themselves and preparing

Recommendations to Unity.

to serve Him with more exertion and alacrity. We love to see them looking to the coming of Jesus for the extension of their fame, instead of bandying compliments and mixing their own vanity with the service of their Master.

“ These things, brethren, we think we behold in you, and therefore rejoice in you right heartily. Come, then, dear brethren, and let us unite in making all things ready for His coming. Let our zeal extend to every part of His will. Let not any difference of sentiment alienate our hearts. Let us examine the Scriptures more thoroughly, and more fervently pray to be directed fully into the way of God. Let not a word dropped by us be understood by you as suggested by unkindness. While we take the liberty of stating our difference from others, we are fully convinced that we have much to learn, and that *a full attainment to the order of the first churches would not necessarily imply great growth in grace, or in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* Great grace rest upon you all.”

Those who desire to know more about his views of church government, are referred to his writings on that subject. It seems desirable, however, to state the order in which he conducted the appointments of the Lord’s house on the Lord’s Day.

Order of Exercises in the Church at Tubbermore.

Before the regular services commenced the Doctor and a few of the brethren greeted one another, according to Rom. xvi. 16. And, in my opinion, he did this for the purpose of shutting the mouths of cavilers, and to maintain to the very letter that consistency for which he was always distinguished.

Before either singing or reading he invariably prayed; and, as is often done in America, he announced, before prayer, the names of the sick, the distressed, and the dying who asked the church in its collective capacity to pray for them. After prayer he usually read a metrical psalm, upon which he commented about ten or fifteen minutes, after which it was sung by the whole church and most of the congregation, in a standing posture. Then, as shown in the chapter on preaching, followed his work of retrospection. He presented a synopsis of the discourse last delivered. The reading of the Scriptures was then introduced by his oft-repeated phrase, "Let us read the Word of God." Upon which followed his exposition, teaching, preaching, and exhortation.

Prayer followed the close of this exercise. And, it may be well to remark that, the Doctor, having all but exhausted his strength on his two hours' discourse, usually called upon one of the best qualified among the lay brethren to offer the prayer.

Order of Exercises in the Church at Tubbermore.

A hymn was then sung as before. Admission and exclusion of members was then attended to; but both the reception and expulsion of members was effected in the presence of the whole church and congregation. For the ostensible purposes of honoring the Lord Jesus, and of vindicating the purity of His religion, the repentant sinner was publicly admitted, the penitent apostate was publicly restored, and the heretical and the immoral were publicly expelled. Dr. Carson taught that if the worthy are to be received publicly, so, *most especially*, ought the unworthy to be publicly extruded.*

The Lord's Supper was then observed. And this also was attended to in the presence of the congregation, so that the Lord's death might be prominently exhibited before the minds of the unconverted. Dr. Carson always rendered this an interesting season, not only by allusions to the love and compassion of a crucified Redeemer, but by references to appropriate parts of his previous discourse. Though old and oft-repeated, this ordinance seemed always new; nor was the time spent in observing it long or tedious. There were no prayers offered; thanks only for the emblems, and

* See Acts ix. 26-28; Rom. xvi. 1-3; 1 Cor. v.; Gal. v. 12; Titus iii. 10.

Order of Exercises in the Church at Tubbermore.

it might be for the glorious things which those emblems adumbrated, were presented.* According to primitive example a hymn was then sung, and a collection taken for the poor.

Exhortation. The pastor then, if time and other circumstances permitted, afforded an opportunity to any who desired to address the church in the language of exhortation. Perhaps once a month, on an average throughout the year, one, or two, or three of the brethren spoke simply, and often fervently, from one to ten, or fifteen minutes each. Sometimes the exhortations were interesting and sometimes they were otherwise. The Doctor, however, was the last man to complain of the weakest effort; in fact, he frequently apologized to friends and visitors, when any happened to complain. Many a time have I heard him say, "Oh, the poor fellow did the best he could! he said something!"

This part of the services at Tubbermore virtually differed in nothing from an American conference, except that Dr. Carson detained the learned, the elite, and *even the noble* (when they strayed into his jurisdiction !) to hear what an illiterate farmer, or a poor mechanic could say, by way of encouragement, or of inculcation. And here I find it impossible to suppress that which was told to me after

* See the chapter on Prayer,

Exhortation in a cold House—Pleasant Apology.

the Doctor's death, by one of his most intimate and respected friends—a gentleman of rank and scholarship, lately deceased—A. K. Miller, Esq., of Whitehouse, near Belfast. Mr. Miller visited Tubbermore and became Dr. Carson's guest; he accompanied him to the meeting-house on Sabbath—heard him preach with great satisfaction, and enjoyed all the services in which the Doctor engaged. The weather was cold and the house was uncomfortable; but there were, nevertheless, some present who had warm hearts, and who consequently embraced the opportunity afforded them, before the congregation was dismissed, by delivering some brief exhortations. On their way home Mr. Miller, who, as a Presbyterian, had never before heard an illiterate man speak in such an assembly, ventured to question the propriety of the practice, by saying, "Doctor, I don't see what edification such exhortations can possibly impart." With a most significant allusion to the untoward circumstance of having to listen to the exhortations in a cold house, Dr. Carson affably responded, by saying, "Indeed, sir, the exhortations were not very edifying to the *feet!*"

After the exhortations ended, another prayer was offered—a hymn was sung, and the pastor pronounced the benediction.

CHAPTER VII.

His Views of Communion and Sanctification—Dr. Carson never Published his Views on Communion—"Liberality" not the Cause of his practicing open Communion—Misrepresented by Rev. John Young—Dr. Carson's Letter on this Subject to James Buchanan, Esq.—His Exposition of 1 Cor. i. 30, in a Letter to his Son-in-law.

DR. CARSON lived during the controversy of Fuller, Hall, and Kinghorn on open communion. He was often requested to publish his views on this subject, but all efforts to induce him to do so failed. He, however, promised to leave his family his ideas on this contested question, for posthumous publication; "But," said he, "my views on that subject must not be published while I live."

The Baptist Publication Society have prefixed an article to his book on baptism, written by the Rev. John Young, in which it is said that the church at Tubbermore "have never regarded an obedience to baptism as an indispensable condition of admission to the Lord's Supper. Indeed, they have carried the principle of open communion to the utmost ex-

Dr. Carson's Views of Communion Misrepresented.

tent by receiving members into their body upon evidence of their conversion, with but little inquiry whether they agreed with them on the subject of baptism. Certain it is, that Mr. Carson believed this plan to be consistent with the will of the Lord, and this fact, while it may seem to show that his views of gospel order were not, in all respects, precise and clear, is, at the same time, a strong proof of his extreme liberality and kindness of disposition. It ought, therefore, to bespeak for his writings a very favorable attention from those who are so loud in their complaints of the want of charity among the Baptists. He was as charitable as their hearts could wish, and was ever more ready to hold fellowship even with those Pædo-Baptists, who otherwise taught a pure gospel, than with such Baptists as he might conceive to have departed from genuine orthodoxy.”

In justice to Dr. Carson’s memory, I must say that he solemnly disclaims, in his preface to the book to which the above is prefixed, the principle to which this writer attributes his practice. “Liberality of sentiment,” says the Doctor, “is not a phrase which I admit into my religious vocabulary; for though I love and acknowledge all who love the Lord Jesus, I hold myself as much under the law of God in embracing all the children of God as in

Why he Practiced Open Communion—Letter on the Subject.

forming the articles of my creed. My recognition of all Christians I ground on the authority of Jesus. To set at naught the weakest of Christ's little ones, I call not illiberal, but unchristian."

Here I feel constrained to insert an extract from a letter which Dr. Carson wrote in reply to an epistle from a church in New York, addressed in care of his respected friend, James Buchanan, Esq., late British consul, which shows that his practice, whether right or wrong, proceeded from *principle*, and not from "extreme liberality" or "kindness of disposition." It bears date,

"TUBBERMORE, NORTH OF IRELAND,
"May 6th, 1819."

"The Church of Christ at Tubbermore, to the Church of Christ at New York. Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

"BELOVED BRETHREN:

"It is not from inattention, nor from a want of impression of the importance of the subject of your communication, that we did not at first fully reply to you. The union of all who believe in the Lord Jesus is a thing for which we are most deeply interested, and the almost total want of it among the churches of Christ, that we deem on the whole

Letter on Open Communion.

nearest to the model of the first churches, is a thing that causes to us the most unfeigned sorrow.

"If that brotherly intercourse and earnest care for each other that subsisted among the churches in the days of the apostles, is not now to be found among those who profess to follow their practice, as far as it was approved by Jesus, the causes ought to be sought out and removed. In our opinion the chief of those causes is not the difference of sentiment, great and greatly to be deplored, as this is, but is owing to the exercise of an authority never conferred on the churches by the Lord Jesus : to refuse or exclude for difference of sentiment, any of those who give evidence that they have been bought by the blood of Christ. Not that we deem it a matter of slight importance that all the disciples of Christ should know and practice all His institutions. On the contrary, we hold this a matter of very great importance, for the attainment of which all the churches ought never to cease to plead with their heavenly Father. Ignorance of any divine institution is an evil, and must be felt as such by a church as far as it exists in any of the body. But the question is, What is *God's* way of getting rid of the evil ? We believe, from Phil. iii. 15, and numerous passages to which there is not room to refer in this letter, that it is by forbear-

Letter on Open Communion.

ance, affectionate instruction, and prayer. Many, on the contrary, have thought that the most effectual way to make a disciple receive an ordinance of Jesus, is to *refuse him fellowship* till he has complied.

“ Notwithstanding all we have heard in favor of this plan, we still deem it the wisdom of man. Accordingly, we have found that God has made foolish this wisdom. Long has it been tried without success, and of late, in some parts of Ireland, it has been carried so far that *some individuals can scarcely find a second to unite with them in constant fellowship*. By permitting Satan to work them up to this frenzy, it appears to us that God has affixed His seal of disapprobation on the sentiment in its lowest degree, and to lead sober-minded Christians who have been led away by its plausibility to examine more attentively the ground of their opinion.

“ You will observe, then, dear brethren, that we do not plead for forbearance as a useful scheme left to our discretion, or justify it, as some have done, from that pleasing variety found among the works of God. Such language we hold in utter abhorrence! Variety, in the works of creation, is a *beauty*, but God is the *Author* of *that* variety! Difference of sentiment upon every thing revealed

Letter on Open Communion.

by God is an evil, because it is the sinful ignorance of men. Can God command all His people to honor His will? and shall it be a perfection to be variously ignorant of this? *It detracts, then, considerably from the joy with which we should have received your letter, that we find no notice taken of this subject, but, on the contrary, that you seem to make baptism a term of fellowship.*

The greater part of our members not only have been baptized, but we are convinced that views on this subject extensively affect other matters in Scripture, but we all deem that a man who has been received by Jesus, ought not to be rejected by us; and that if He feed His people by His ordinances, it would be criminal in us, as far as in our power, to join in confederacy to starve the weakest of them. We think that the man who has been admitted to the fellowship of "the general assembly and church of the first-born," is undoubtedly worthy of a seat with us!

"Dear brethren, we know what has been objected to our views on this subject; and as we have not had time fully to reply to objections, we deem it unnecessary to state all the grounds of our opinion. We know that there is no command of Jesus that may be plausibly set aside. We entreat you to examine this subject—recollecting that, *if it be sin-*

Second Letter on Open Communion.

ful to receive any that Christ has forbidden, it is also sinful to refuse any that He has invited. There is no safe side in error! That Jesus will not approve of refusing fellowship to *any of His brethren*, known to be such, appears to us to have the irresistible light of self-evident truth.”

Thus wrote Dr. Alexander Carson in 1819; and, in allusion to the same subject, in another letter, addressed, in 1833, to Mr. Buchanan, the following occurs: “The church in this place has always acted on *that principle*. There is nothing of greater importance to the welfare and prosperity of the churches than to bring them to understand this point. But there is nothing in which they are so ignorant, and to which they are so averse. They consider that they have attained to perfection in this matter; and, by a false view of the want of zeal, consider themselves entitled to refuse their fellowship to many of the sheep of Christ.”

The following letter, addressed by Dr. Carson to his son-in-law, William Tough, Esq., of Dublin, conveying his ideas of the doctrine of *Sanctification*, as taught in 1 Cor. i. 30, will, I hope, be read not only with much pleasure, but with great profit. *The view given is as original and novel as it is glorious:*

His Views of Sanctification as Taught in 1 Cor. i. 30.

“TUBBERMORE, May 14th, 1826.

“MY DEAR WILLIAM:

“As you have not told me particularly what were Dr. B——’s views of 1 Cor. i. 30, I will just state to you what are my views of that passage. The sanctification here spoken of, appears not to be that which is wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, which is progressive and never perfect in this world. The sanctification here spoken of, is that which *Christ is made* to us, and not that we are *made by Christ*. The sanctification of the Spirit is performed in us by the Spirit through the *word*. The sanctification spoken of in this passage we have not in our own persons, but in Christ, as one with Him by faith in His righteousness through death. It is this that makes us fit to go to heaven the moment we believe in the Lord Jesus. We can not enter heaven, but as having a *perfect holiness*, as well as a *perfect righteousness*. This we have in Christ: as we are one with Him, whatsoever is His is ours!

“To suppose that the sanctification here spoken of is that which is wrought in us, would oblige me to explain the *righteousness* and *redemption* here spoken of, as that which is in ourselves. For you may observe that Christ is said to be *sanctification* to us, just as He is *redemption* and *righteousness*.

His Views of Sanctification as Taught in 1 Cor. i. 30.

Now, if the sanctification which He is to us is that which is personally in us, then the righteousness spoken of is not that which we have in Christ, but that which Christ works in us—that is, inherent righteousness. But the righteousness which Christ is made to us is not the righteousness which He *works in us*, but which He has *wrought for us*. We have, then, righteousness *in Him*, and not *in ourselves*.

“In the same way with respect to redemption. Christ is made redemption to us by God, not by enabling us to redeem ourselves, but by Himself paying the price. If, then, the redemption here spoken of is not in us, neither is the sanctification. God does not enable us to work a righteousness to justify ourselves, nor to pay a price to redeem ourselves ; but Christ is, of God, made to us both righteousness and redemption. And, in like manner, so is He made sanctification and wisdom. By His Spirit He makes us wise unto salvation ; but still, we are far from being as wise as we ought to be. The meek Saviour addressed His disciples as “foolish,” and slow to receive the things of God ! How often did He exclaim—“How long shall I bear you ?” But all the wisdom that God requires of us is found in Christ. We have *every thing in Him !* In short, this passage shows us how the believer stands com-

His Views of Sanctification as Taught in 1 Cor. i. 30.

plete in Jesus Christ. Whatever the law demands of us, it has it on our account in Him.

"In this way the Christian stands perfect before God, while in another point of view he is utterly deficient. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Now if we are considered as in ourselves, and not as we stand in Christ, as one with Him, there are a thousand things to be laid to our charge. It may be laid to our charge that we are *ignorant* of many parts of the divine will; but the answer is, Christ is our wisdom. It may be laid to our charge that we are not perfectly holy; the answer is, Christ is our sanctification.

"This view, however, you will not find in any of the commentators. I mentioned it to Mr. Haldane, when I saw him last summer, and he adopted it. Better, however, to say nothing but from its own evidence in the passage. It is quite evident that Christ is made the 'sanctification' to us, just as He is made righteousness and redemption.

"Most truly yours,

"ALEX. CARSON."

CHAPTER VIII.

Attachment to his Church—Could not be induced to Abandon them—He Wept when a Member was Excluded—Never exacted a Salary from them—His Intercourse with Ministers of other Denominations—His Regret at not having seen Dr. Chalmers, and Dr. Chalmers' Esteem for Him and his Writings—His Love for and Treatment of Children—Letter from his Daughter, Mrs. Hanna, on this Subject.

His attachment to his church.

Nothing could induce him to quit the people of his charge, although they were not able to give him more than a mere pittance for his labors. Neither the Greek Professorship in the University of Glasgow, with its annual remuneration of some four or five thousand dollars, nor the allurements presented by some city churches, could persuade him to forsake the poor section of God's heritage of which he had the oversight. The pastoral and the paternal relationship he considered very similar. He considered it as unnatural for a pastor to desert his fond and faithful people as for a father to desert his children.

He Wept when a Member was Excluded.

When one of the brethren was publicly excommunicated, the Doctor went home and retired to his garden, where he thought no eye could witness the ebullition of his feelings. One of the deacons of his church followed him to the garden; where, to his surprise, he found his pastor, not meditating, or praying, or glorying over the fallen, but stretched on the green-sward, bitterly weeping. The deacon having, with deference and sympathy, inquired the cause of his affliction, he exclaimed—"Is it a wonder that I weep! have I not this day seen a member of my Lord's body cut off?" How painful it must have been to him to have aided, even under the authority of Christ, in expelling obnoxious members! But, in the capacity of a Christian and of a church member, he knew no man after the flesh. He invariably addressed his son by the name of "brother," when he asked him to pray in the church. A son, and yet a brother!

On another occasion, when one of the members was about to be expelled without what the Doctor considered sufficient evidence of his guilt, the tender-hearted and faithful pastor extended one of his arms and, with much feeling, said—"Beloved brethren, first cut off this hand before you exclude that guiltless brother! I can not consent to his expulsion because I do not believe him guilty."

His Intercourse with Ministers of other Denominations.

And as to the exaction of a salary, strangers often told him that his church ought to pay him a larger sum; but he usually responded by saying—“No; the poor creatures are not able; they are too heavily burdened by rents, and tithes, and taxes.” On this point the Rev. A. Campbell, in his letters from Europe, says: “Dr. Alexander Carson, it is alleged, *spoiled* his church at Tubbermore, as parents spoil a child, by being too kind to it. He never exacted a salary from it.”

His intercourse with ministers of other denominations.

The late learned Dr. Jebb, Bishop of Limerick, visited and invited him to his palace at the south. The Hon. and Rev. Mr. Pomroy, an Episcopalian, and son of Lord Northland, manifested great love and respect for him. And the Rev. James Spencer Knox, son of the Lord Bishop of Derry, and to whom accrued the tithes of the parish in which the Doctor lived, treated him with marked attention and kindness—he never charged him tithes for his farm. In fact, this distinguished dignitary of the Established Church signalized his esteem for his Baptist neighbor, not only by his liberality, but by having him as a guest at his palace whenever he had bishops, or other great personages, at dinner. And the Doctor showed how far he reciprocated the mag-

His Intercourse with Ministers of other Denominations.

nanimity of the Episcopalian, and how much he appreciated, not merely his hospitality and benevolence, but his Christian bearing and respectable scholarship, by dedicating to him his treatise on "The Figures of Speech." In his dedicatory epistle he says: "In sending into the world my treatise on the Figures of Speech, I can not deny myself the gratification of expressing the high obligations I owe to your friendship. You were the first of my literary friends to whose kind review I have been indebted. But, sir, great as my obligations are to you for the interest you have taken in this work, it is not this that, in my estimation, demands my warmest acknowledgments. While *you* are a very devoted, zealous, and active minister of the Establishment, and *I* a Dissenter, from the first moment of your accession to the parish in which I reside, you have not only shown those ordinary attentions that discover a liberal mind, but you have solicitously sought opportunities to serve me. This is quite a different thing from the good offices of a minister of the Established Church living at a distance from me. I have the honor of a very extended friendship among the greatest ornaments of your church; but your friendship, on the very scene of our labors, is evidence of a peculiar degree of liberality. Coming in constant contact, as we do,

Dr. Chalmers' Respect for him.

I consider your uninterrupted friendship as the highest instance of magnanimity. In our situation a thousand things will occur calculated to excite sectarian feelings."

The late pious and lamented Bickersteth, of England, often interchanged Christian courtesies with the Doctor. When either wrote a book he caused his publisher to send it to the other, "with the kind regards of the author."

He lived on terms of intimacy with many Congregational and Presbyterian ministers. Out of many, I would mention the names of Drs. Wardlaw and Ewing, of Glasgow; Davidson, of England; together with Drs. Cooke, Edgar, Morgan, and Bryce, of Belfast; and though last, not the least loved, or respected, his endeared friend and neighbor, the Rev. Dr. Barnet, of Moneymore, whose pulpit he sometimes occupied and whose friendship he very highly prized.

I often heard him express regret at not having made the acquaintance of his great cotemporary and admirer, Dr. Chalmers. And if Dr. Carson was not misinformed, the far-famed Scotchman longed to set his eyes on the Irish critic. Chalmers used Carson's treatise on the Plenary Inspiration of Scripture as a text-book in his class at college; and, if his students have been faithful reporters,

Chalmers' Opinion of Carson's Arguments—Attachment to Children.

he often expressed both his approbation and admiration of the manner in which Dr. Carson discomfited all who tampered with the inspired Book. The feelings of Dr. Chalmers were sometimes evolved by such exclamations as, "Carson graveled* them! He has forever silenced and most triumphantly refuted them!"

When the Doctor was dead, many of those great and good men traveled far to weep over his bier and to accompany him to "his long home." What a sight! Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Methodist ministers following sorrowfully the Baptist to his grave! Look, bigotry, look upon that picture and be ashamed!

He manifested uncommon attachment to children.

The following valuable and interesting article on this subject has been furnished me by his daughter, Mrs. Hanna, to which I will prefix only one incident, that may help to demonstrate how philosophically and humanely Dr. Carson managed children.

When I lived in his house, a number of his grandchildren frequently came to spend some weeks there. Other visitors having rendered it somewhat difficult on one occasion to serve the children at dinner hour,

* "Graveled," a strong term for having prostrated, or overcome, them.

His Love for Children—Mrs. Hanna's Letter.

the youngsters, whose appetites were rendered sharp by their morning sports, were desired to wait patiently until after the adult part of the family and the strangers had dined. Their hushed murmurings and almost suppressed complainings, however, reached the tender-hearted man; upon which he addressed the lady who managed such affairs—“What!” said the Doctor, “do you think that those dear children ought to possess more patience than I have? You are greatly mistaken if you think that you have adopted the best method of teaching them patience. I can not eat my dinner to-day until they get theirs!” What a lesson to a few mothers —what a rebuke to multitudes of fathers!

Mrs. Hanna writes :

“MY DEAR SIR—You wish me to furnish you with some little incidents in the life of my beloved father which may have a tendency to interest, or instruct, your readers. Most willingly and gladly do I comply. Indeed, I have a mournful pleasure in talking and thinking of this dear parent.

Oh, what a tender, kind, self-denying parent was ours! Could he but get his wife and children made comfortable, all was well. Self seemed to be entirely forgotten. You are aware that he was indulgent to his offspring, even almost to a fault.

Incidents Communicated by his Daughter, Mrs. Hanna.

Never, that I can recollect, did he, in a single instance, refuse to grant me any request. It was his delight to see us made happy. Indeed, he has often acted as our pleader with my beloved mother; for she, of course, did not at times see it her duty to satisfy all our childish desires; and at such seasons, if he were present, he would say, ‘Do, dear, if you possibly can, let the poor things have what they wish; it does me good to see them pleased.’

“But notwithstanding his uncommon indulgence to his children, not one of them ever caused him pain by undutiful conduct. His word to his family was law. It was enough for us to know that father wished us to do so and so—that moment it was done. He never chastised any of his eight daughters; his sons he sometimes did correct with a rod; but instances of this kind, I am happy to say, were of very rare occurrence. I remember well having been much struck and greatly pleased with an observation of my father’s, on the morning of my dear sister Eliza’s departure for the land of spirits. A few hours after this beloved sister had slept her last sleep, my father was standing by her cold remains; ‘I have now,’ said he, addressing those present, ‘been bereaved of two of my beloved ones; and yet I am greatly blessed; for although I have been the father of thirteen children, none of them

Incidents Communicated by his Daughter, Mrs. Hanna.

ever sent a pang to my heart by an act of disobedience or bad conduct.' I do not state this for the purpose of eulogizing myself, or any of my brothers or sisters. Indeed, none of his children take any credit to themselves for their implicitly obeying such a father; we certainly would have been wicked in the extreme had we acted otherwise.

"Although I was but a little girl when my brother Alexander departed this life, I well remember observing with what untiring and tender solicitude my dear father watched by the dying bed of his beloved son. Alexander had early sought and found the Lord. Oh, with what strong cords of affection had that dear boy entwined himself around my father's heart! I believe he was his son in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as by birth.

"My father's love for children was so prominent a trait in his character, I feel persuaded you have brought it forward in your book. He loved the whole infant race. He has often said that 'There is something so guileless, artless, and lovely in a little child, that the heart must be cold and hard that would not feel softened by coming in contact with the innocent prattle and winning smiles of infancy.' On his own children and grandchildren he almost doted. How often has he dandled them in his arms and soothed them to sleep.

Incidents Communicated by his Daughter, Mrs. Hanna.

"I recollect one evening he was caressing one of his grandchildren, when a gentleman who was present, said to him, 'Why, Doctor, I think I never saw any person so fond of children as you are; indeed, you appear almost foolish about them!' 'Fond of children!' my father responded, 'yes, sir, I am fond of children, and I would not dignify him with the title of *man*, that despised or shunned the society of such dear innocent little lambs!' In him the dear helpless creatures always found a friend and advocate. It was no uncommon sight to see two or three of us perched upon his own back or that of his chair at once, when he was engaged writing on some of the most intricate subjects that ever his able pen touched. He did not, as some fathers would have done, tell us to go and play. No, no; he would look up from his writing and smile sweetly upon us. Oh, my father, my father, I shall never look upon thy like again!"

"Before my father was blessed with either son or daughter, his prayer to God was, that he might never have a child if they were not also destined to become the children of the Most High. From the earliest dawn of reason we were taught to look upon this earth as not our home, and that here we are only pilgrims, and that for a short time. Oh, how have we been instructed to seek a better country,

Incidents Communicated by his Daughter, Mrs. Hanna.

even an heavenly, and, Moses like, to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. How often in its fullness and freeness has the gospel of Jesus been brought before us. Oh, that we had followed more closely the bright example set us by our beloved parents, and attended better to their wholesome words of instruction ! But, blessed be God, their teaching has not been without effect. The seed sown has in some measure been gathered by them ; they lived to see the last of their thirteen children professing faith in their crucified Redeemer, and four of them die triumphing in the Cross. Another of my beloved sisters has since followed them to the celestial city. Oh, what a glorious company ! They are now, I doubt not, casting their blood-bought crowns at His feet, who shall forever sit a Priest upon His throne.

“ My father by no means despised worldly prosperity. No ; on the contrary, he manifested deep anxiety for the temporal welfare of his family ; but his feelings on this subject were as nothing when compared with the intense desire he ever felt for their spiritual advancement and growth in grace.

“ I remember one evening, some few months before my dear father’s death, two of my sisters and brother Robert, together with myself, accompanied

Incidents Communicated by his Daughter, Mrs. Hanna.

our beloved and then only parent to spend some time in the house of a friend. When returning home I occupied the same side of the car with my dear father. The night was cold and bleak, scarcely a star was seen to twinkle in the sky, and as we passed Fort William the wind howled mournfully through its venerable trees. One of my little boys sat on my knee, and my father, fearing that I could not keep both the child and myself comfortable, took him from me, and placing him fondly in one of the large folds of his cloak, said to me, ‘My dear child, bless the Lord for the dear children he has given you, and *oh, do try to fulfill your duty to them as a Christian mother! Train them up for God.* We have all been made to feel that this world is but a wilderness. Oh, then, seek all your happiness from God, and teach your children to do the same.’ His words, though few, were nevertheless powerful; they sank like lead into my soul. I can never forget them. Oh, that I had more faithfully fulfilled his injunctions! God grant me grace to do so in future, and to His name be all praise.”

Description by the Rev. Samuel Green, of London.

CHAPTER IX.

His Humility, Piety, Residence, Meeting-house, and Preaching described by the Rev. Samuel Green, of London—His Appearance and Personal Habits delineated—An Abstemious Liver—An early Riser—A great Tea-drinker—Bountifully Rewarded for his Authorship by the English Brethren—His Visits to England and Scotland—Letter from Joseph D. Carson, Esq., on the Literary Assistance rendered by his Grandfather to Mr. Haldane—The Degree of LL.D. conferred on him by two American Colleges—His Condescension in accepting it—Titles degrade such a Man—Extracts from the Correspondence—Asked to Revise the New Testament—Reasons why he would not have Complied—His Opinion of the Translators and of the common Bible.

THE following graphic description of Dr. Carson is from the eloquent pen of the Rev. Samuel Green, of London, a gentleman to whom the writer owes many obligations. It was written in 1840, when Mr. Green visited Ireland as the Secretary of the Baptist Irish Society. Mr. Green was one of those whom Dr. Carson very highly esteemed.

“ We proceeded to Tubbermore, wishing to have an opportunity of conversing with Mr. Carson, who for many years has been laboring in that village,

Strength and Docility—Residence—Family and Meeting-house.

and whose writings have made him widely known. It was gratifying to learn, wherever we went, that he is held in very high esteem by all parties—a fact which involves no ordinary testimony to his excellence, as there is, perhaps, no country in which religious prejudices run higher than they do in Ireland—the Protestant North as well as the Catholic South.

“ Whatever had been my ideas of his deep piety, his good sense, and extensive information, these were greatly exceeded by what we found him to be. *We were delighted with his urbanity, communicativeness, and perfect freedom from every thing like assumption; with the strength of a giant he is meek, bland, docile as a child.*

“ We found the good man in a cottage situate near a bog, on a gently rising ground, and in the midst of fields cultivated, and not scantily planted with trees by his own hands. He has contrived here to bring up a large family, all of whom know and love the Saviour. Most of them occupy respectable stations in society.

“ How shall I describe his place of worship? In form it resembles the letter T, the pulpit in the back wall being at the point of junction; no plaster adorns its walls, no ceiling indicates the regard of the worshipers for splendor. At the end of the

His Lecture—Personal Appearance and abstemious Habits.

horizontal line are galleries ; the perpendicular of the T has been added as an enlargement to accommodate his church and congregation, consisting of one thousand persons, or thereabout.

“A lecture, which it was our good fortune to hear from Mr. Carson, was distinguished by child-like simplicity and transparent piety.”

In addition to what Mr. Green has written, I will merely add a few lines respecting his appearance and personal habits.

His complexion was a mixture of the fair and florid. Studious and abstemious as he was he could not be called “a pale-faced student.” There was a benignity of expression about his open and ample countenance which was inexpressibly fascinating ; and if “eyes have tongues,” it may truly be said that his were vocal with kindness ! Such eyes would never betoken the severe critic ! His nose was Roman. In stature he was about five feet nine inches. At the age of sixty-seven his brown hair had not entirely changed its original hue. His frame could be classed neither with the lank nor with the corpulent. He was very abstemious, fond of exercise in the open air, and enjoyed good health and much physical strength. He usually abstained from delicacies, in which all who surrounded him indulged. It may be said that he almost lived on one

Ate little Food—Great Tea-drinker—Never Lounged—British Generosity.

meal a day. His breakfast was a small affair—a scanty repast. He partook of very little food either in the morning or evening, but at dinner he usually ate as freely as others. He was a great tea-drinker; and, although he can not, in this respect, compete with the celebrated Robert Hall, of England, or the venerated Luther Rice, of America, certain it is that he very much enjoyed this favorite beverage. Every Sabbath evening, after the arduous labors of the day, he was usually furnished with a full pot, a cup and saucer, which, without cream or sugar, he continued to quaff till the hour of retiring.

Those things may be accounted for by the fact that he seemed very desirous of being kept wide awake throughout his wakeful hours. In the morning he never attempted to discharge his mental task with a loaded stomach; and in the evening he seemed determined to keep vigil longer than any one else. After dinner he sometimes dozed a little on his chair, but I never saw him, during the hours of day, lounging on either a couch or sofa.

It is certainly due to our English brethren to say, that when Dr. Carson became fully known to them as an author, they treated him generously—yea, nobly. A few weeks only after the last edition of his work on baptism had been published, they

His Visits to England.

sent him a bill of one thousand dollars from London.

The Rev. Spencer Murch, of Stepney College, shared largely in Dr. Carson's esteem and gratitude. I often heard him speak of both the energy and judgment of that young minister with great respect.

His visits to England were to Dr. Carson peculiarly delightful. He always returned home literally charmed. For weeks—nay, for months—after each visit, he discoursed to his family and friends of the kindness bestowed upon him, and of the Heaven-begotten spirit of Christian love which he enjoyed, both privately and publicly, among the English brethren. He seemed to regret very much that he had not made their acquaintance sooner. He cherished a perpetual sense of his obligations to the Rev. Dr. Steane, through whom he was first introduced in London, and to Dr. Steane's family. The unremitting attention paid him while an invalid in his house was never forgotten. His gratitude extended even to the children of Dr. Steane, who, he said, often entered his room, "gently, and on tip-toe," with great solicitude, inquiring for his health.

And among many others, he often made respectful mention of his pleasant visits to the house of

His Visits to Scotland—LL.D. conferred by two Colleges.

the great essayist, John Foster, and to that of the Rev. Wm. Crowe.

For about forty years he lived on terms of intimacy with the late Robert Haldane, Esq., and his brother, the Rev. Jas. A. Haldane, of Scotland—men whose zeal and Christian benevolence have made them generally known. Dr. Carson visited Scotland frequently, and spent a great deal of time with those studious friends. Mr. R. Haldane, in a commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, published in his own name, has acknowledged the aid rendered him by Dr. Carson. But a letter* addressed to me, by Joseph D. Carson, Esq., one of Dr. Carson's grandsons, tends to prove that the assistance rendered by Dr. Carson was very material—in fact, that it amounted, almost, to the exclusive authorship of those works. But I must not comment on this delicate disclosure.

Through the unsolicited kindness of the Rev. Dr. Maclay, of New York, the honorary degree of LL.D. was conferred by two colleges on Dr. Carson about the same time. One of those institutions is located at Jackson, in the State of Louisiana, under the presidency of an Episcopalian; the other is Bacon College, in the State of Kentucky.

* See Appendix, A.

The Honor belongs to America—His Condescension.

Yes, to the “Western wilds” of America belong the honor which was rightfully the inheritance of Glasgow, Dublin, Edinburgh, or Oxford. But, to their lasting shame, these universities waived their claims to the greatest scholar in the British empire, because he fearlessly exposed many of their best supporters, or because he was identified with an unpopular denomination!

When Moore, the poet, was offered a title in a foreign country he refused, declaring that he would never be a count, knight, or lord, except conferred by his own country. But, to his transcendent condescension be it told, that, although Dr. Carson well knew that all the universities in the world could add nothing to his literary accomplishments, and but little to his literary fame, still he cordially accepted the honors presented him, even from some of the most remote regions of a foreign land.

The writer must confess, that grateful as he feels to those who intended to honor his preceptor, yet he has often been sorry that those distinctions were not withheld, or conferred upon those in Great Britain and Ireland who may need, or who might possibly be aided by them. But of what possible, or *supposable*, use could a doctorship be to *Alexander Carson*? All the letters in the alphabet, whether prefixed or affixed to such a name, only tend to de-

His Opinion of Education in America.

grade it! I would as soon prefix Mr. to the immortal names of George Washington and Napoleon Bonaparte, as prefix Dr. to the illustrious names of Jonathan Edwards, Robert Hall, and Alexander Carson!

I subjoin an extract from one of Dr. Carson's acknowledgments.

“TUBBERMORE, IRELAND,
“Jan. 10th, 1842.”

“I am greatly pleased with the zeal of the people of America on the subject of education, and that so many learned institutions are supported in the States. With all my heart I wish that they may succeed in raising the country to a most distinguished name in both literature and science. The old establishments of learning in Great Britain affect a contempt for other institutions, which is very arrogant. There is no reason why each of all the literary and philosophical institutions should not take rank with any of the proudest seats of science in England! The institutions of your country have the incalculable advantage that they are not encumbered with useless forms and exploded trifles.

“I am, my dear sir, most truly yours,
“ALEXANDER CARSON.”

It is due both to my readers and Dr. Carson to

Asked to Translate the New Testament—Dr. Maclay's Letter.

state, that he was invited, in 1844, by some members of the American and Foreign Bible Society, through my venerated friend, the Rev. Dr. Maclay, of New York, to prepare a revised edition of the New Testament, and this invitation was accompanied by a promise of a full remuneration for his labors, together with an assurance of having it adopted by the Society, and of having it sold in England below the current price of the Testaments issued by the British and Foreign Bible Society. An extract from Dr. Maclay's letter to Dr. Carson will speak for itself.

“That such a work is necessary and desirable I have long been convinced, and I know of no man in the world into whose hand I would more willingly commit this all-important business. Your perfect knowledge of the Greek and English languages—your habits of intense thought respecting the philology and philosophy of language, and your constant habits of close study to ascertain the exact mind of the Holy Spirit in the sacred Scriptures, etc., are qualifications which appear to me absolutely necessary to qualify a man for being an able and faithful translator of the sacred Scriptures.”

When this proposal reached Tubbermore Dr. Carson was in England, and consequently never saw it, for he returned in his shroud. By the re-

Reasons why he would not have undertaken the Work.

quest of his family, and under their immediate direction, I replied to Dr. Maclay as follows:

"Your suggestion respecting a revised translation of the New Testament, I doubt not, he would have taken into prayerful consideration. I believe, however, that *he would not have undertaken the work*, as I know he highly prized the common translation. He believed that *all its words* have been rendered *sacred by long and established usage*. A short time previous to the Doctor's death, a Scotch minister undertook to establish beyond all controversy the fact that baptism is to be performed by immersion, by giving a *new translation* of Rom. vi. 5. He substituted the word 'have' for the last occurrence of the word 'shall,' and wrote to Dr. Carson for a critical opinion of his revision. I well remember with what agony the Doctor clasped his hands and exclaimed, 'O Lord, will men never cease to *make* Scripture! When will they cease tampering with Thy holy Word!' Turning to one of his pupils, he said, 'Get your Greek Testament and look at that verse, for I think you will be able to detect the error into which that man has fallen.' When he was told that the verb is in the future tense, he mournfully addressed us about the hazard of such exploits. 'Let that,' said he, 'teach you not to be tampering with the Word of God! That

Danger of Tampering with Scripture—Opinion of the Translators.

man would exclude the glorious doctrine of the final resurrection as taught by that word “shall,” in order, unnecessarily, to establish a favorite ordinance.””

To the foregoing, for many and obvious reasons, nothing will be added, except a few extracts from Dr. Carson’s works, which convey his opinion of the common Bible, and of its translators. In his Review of Dr. Brown, on the Payment of Tribute, he writes :

“ Our unfortunate translators receive an indignant rebuke from our author for the word ‘ damnation.’ He suspects that they employed this word from courtly complaisance to King James. And I may suppose, with as good reason, that it was to please this monarch that they translated the same word in the same way in 1. Cor. xi. 29. *Far away* be every such insinuation with respect to these good and worthy men, to whom every Christian who speaks the English language is under so deep obligations.”

On the work of Interpretation and Translation, he speaks thus, in another place :

“ Persons who interpret, not from their own acquaintance with authors who have written in the language to be interpreted, but merely on the authority of lexicons, will be wonderfully fertile in improvements of the common version, and in various

The common English Bible a noble Work.

possible interpretations of almost every passage. Hardly any thing in the common translation pleases them, and every new dress that can be given to a passage is a discovery of the greatest importance ! There can, indeed, be no rule more general than that he who is perpetually mending our version, is but a tyro in criticism.”

His views of our common English Bible may be ascertained by the following quotation :

“ With respect to the merits of our translation, it is enough to quote the admission of J. K. L., that Roman Catholics admire the common translation of the Bible, with all its imperfections, as a noble work. This is as much as any learned Protestant would say. It is *as much as can be said, with justice, of any translation that ever was made, or ever will be made.* *There must be imperfections in all translations of the Bible and every other book.* Well, if our translation is a noble work, it can not be essentially deficient in conveying the meaning of the original. If this is the real estimate of our translation by the Roman Catholic priesthood, why are there any uncandid attempts at any time, to serve a purpose by reviling this translation ? If our translation is admitted in cool moments to be such, we have a right to attribute opposition to it, to hostility to the Bible.”

Advice respecting how the Scriptures ought to be read.

His advice to Christians respecting the spirit in which they ought to peruse the Scriptures, will close this article :

“In sitting down to a human writing, try every thing with the utmost circumspection and jealousy. But when you sit down to the Scriptures it should not be with the eye of a critic, to find faults, nor, as a judge, to put them to the trial of your own wisdom. As we have the fullest evidence that they are the word of God, read to learn—read to explore the divine wisdom—read to discover what may be hid from human wisdom. As the Scriptures are the word of God, expect such a fullness and perfection in them, that you may dig up the treasures that may have yet escaped the eye of human wisdom. Having found the key of the divine wisdom in the Scriptures, apply it everywhere, and the marked characteristics of that wisdom should be to you the best commentary on the book of God, both of Scripture and Providence.”

His Modesty.

CHAPTER X.

Distinguishing Characteristics: 1. His Modesty: refused to write an Autobiography; seldom used the Personal Pronouns "I" and "We;" never employed Latin or Greek in Conversation, etc., etc.; his Interdict on the Habit; his Rebuke—2. Humility: respect for Man, especially for Christians; Opinion of Mordecai's Conduct; Reflections on Rom. viii. 17, written for a Lady—3. His Humanity: Pity for irrational Animals; the old Horse; the Maid and the Hen—4. Credulity; in him Extremes met; the Maid and the House-clock; the broken Delf and the pitied Peddler—5. Assiduity, Economy, and Accuracy: never spent an idle Day; Attention to Greek and Hebrew, etc.; Hatred of Idlers; Employed others to read to him; listened five Hours and a quarter consecutively to Warburton's Divine Legation; his retentive Memory; his knowledge of Biography; Acquaintance with History, both Ancient and Modern, Civil and Ecclesiastical—6. Things in which he was Inferior, Things in which he Excelled.

1. His *modesty*.

When requested by a highly respected friend to write, in a series of letters, an autobiography, much as it is to be regretted, he absolutely declined. Self, with him, was dead and buried, or, if living, it was so infinitely far away, that his most intimate

His sparing use of ‘ I’ and “We”—Heavenly Mindedness.

friends could not behold it. The pronoun “I” was seldom used, either in the social circle or the pulpit. Nor did he substitute the modest but factitious “we,” in order to avoid apparent dictation. Evidently his sparing use of those much-loved, but abused, pronouns, was caused by his absorbing ideas, which required characters of mightier import to express them. His writings prove this; for when perspicuity demanded the “I,” he never refused its service.

The Lord Jesus, his lowly Master, seemed always prominent in his thoughts; and the more he thought, and preached, and wrote about Christ, the less he thought and spoke about himself. In this respect his face shone, although he knew it not. At my first interview his extreme simplicity, modesty, and godly sincerity made an impression on my mind which the two years of my happy intimate acquaintance rendered indelible. Would that this undefinable, inexpressible something could be printed! Perhaps a meager outline of the impression may possibly be conveyed, by saying that God seemed to honor him with such an effulgence of His grace as enabled him always to talk and act as if in the immediate presence of “the Most High.” The scholar and the philosopher were absorbed in the humble, trusting, thankful saint.

Never used Latin or Greek in Conversation.

Without hyperbole, or exaggeration, it may be confidently stated, that he was as familiar with the Greek and Hebrew languages as he was with the English; and yet I never heard him interlard any conversation, or discourse, with even a word from these or other languages. And he not only discarded the pedantic custom, but, like Scaliger, who rebuked the vanity of the Scotch minister who addressed him in Latin, by declaring that he had not learned Scotch! Dr. Carson frequently chided by his silence the unconscious pedantry of some visitors when they used Latin or Greek. He considered it not only impolite, but barbarous to converse in the presence of others in any foreign tongue. When Latin or Greek phrases or quotations were read from English books in his presence, he laid his interdict on the habit of such writers by saying ironically, "That's the mustard! Why, we could never digest the author's sentiments without a little Latin or Greek!"

In his last publications, wherein it was absolutely necessary to insert Greek quotations, he superseded the Greek by the Roman alphabet. "In order," he says, "to make the work more agreeable and useful to the English reader, I have not printed a single Greek word." For this innovation, however, on barbarous usage, he lived to realize his presenti-

Amusing Rebuke—His Humility.

timents. Men who could, *perhaps*, conjugate a Greek verb, *murmured*.

The following rather pleasant incident shows that, with all his forbearance, he did not always permit the querulous to remain unrebuked.

While a Presbyterian he sometimes acted as moderator in their assemblies. On one of those occasions, a minister, who was somewhat cynical and fond of notoriety, seemed greatly annoyed by a trifling noise in the house, and said, angrily, "Mr Moderator, I can not hear my ears!" After having gratified the vanity of the fastidious gentleman, by hushing the noise, Dr. Carson asked him the mortifying question, "Now, sir; *what do your ears say?*"

2. *His humility.*

Though surrounded from infancy by many who treated the poor as though they belonged not to the human family, yet he always regarded the most untutored and degraded of Adam's posterity as a "palace in ruins." Neither the poverty nor the ignorance of a pauper could annihilate the Doctor's respect for the immortal mind which occupied the ungarnished, or unsightly, tenement. Because of the gem which it contained, he respected the shattered casket. In order to manifest his relationship to all the human family, and at the same time dis-

tinguish the world from the Christian brotherhood, he frequently spoke of them as “our brethren of mankind.” I can not express how ardently he desired the physical, intellectual, and spiritual elevation of man. He shook the hand of the rustic Christian with as much avidity, and with as much warmth, as that of a lord. He recognized the poor and the illiterate of Christ’s flock wheresoever he met them, and gave proof demonstrative that he considered Christianity, however humbly allied, worthy of being honored. When told of the haughtiness and vanity manifested by some *professed* Christians toward others, he said, “Some persons are too vain to recognize poor believers in public! Never be ashamed to shake hands with any man. In fact, it is a debt we owe to human nature!”

But lest it should be thought that his respect for the poor caused him to despise the command, “Render to all their due—honor to whom honor,” so as to deface the lines which separate one class of society from another, I will insert his comment on the conduct of Mordecai: “Is there,” he asks, “any passage in this history, which, either by implication, or expressly, commends Mordecai for not bowing to Haman? That proud and insolent piety, that refuses the customary tokens of respect, was

Knowledge compatible with Humility—Sublime Reflection.

not practiced by the patriarchs, nor was it inculcated by the apostles."

Nothing is more evident than that the more a man knows of God and of himself, and the nearer he approaches heaven, the more humble he becomes. Grace and vanity have always been antagonists. They can never dwell together. In fact, this man and many other mighty men have demonstrated that although "knowledge, without grace, puffeth up," yet that knowledge, when sanctified, maketh humble. For, as I have heretofore written, with all his classical, philological, and philosophical acquirements, he especially learned the humility of his lowly Master. With the colossal stature of a giant he possessed the meekness and simplicity of a child. May the writer and all his readers in this imitate his example.

Those who read the ecstatic and sublime reflection on Rom. viii. 17, written by the Doctor for a Christian lady, will not be surprised at the respect which he paid even to indigent Christians.

"Come, my fellow-Christians, let us take a view of the land of promise ! Here is one of the heights of Nebo, from which we may have a cheering glance at the heavenly Canaan. 'Heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ !' Boundless glory ! We shall reign with Christ over all worlds ! Proud

Religion exalts Man even above the Angels.

Science, come hither and learn the incomparable dignity of human nature, as united to the incarnate Jehovah! Tell me no more of my meanness in comparison of the innumerable orders of exalted intellect that inhabit immensity of creation! Though there were as many worlds as there are grains of sand in the earth, there is not in them all a superior to redeemed man. *Even in heaven he has no superior but God!* Does not Christ reign over angels? and if we are joint heirs with Him, must we not reign with Him? We were, indeed, in station made a little lower than the angels; but by our union with Christ, in His incarnation, we are raised above all created beings. As we are to reign with Christ as being one with Him, we are not only superior to all principalities and powers in heaven, but it is not possible that ever we could have a superior. To eternity we shall remain at the head of creation.

“O Lord, keep my eye forever fixed on this prospect! Let me never descend from the top of Pisgah! Ye Alexanders, ye Cæsars, look here, and turn away from the mean objects of your ambition! Your souls are sordid, your hopes are vulgar, your pursuits are low! *True nobility of mind is possessed only by the Christian!*”

3. *His humanity.*

His Humanity allowed Nothing to be Maltreated or Deceived.

If in his power, there would not be a particle of suffering or misery in the universe. This he avowed in his writings and manifested by his practice. Often he sighed over the degradation and the sorrows of man. He pitied even the irrational creation. He could not bear to see a beast, when yoked to a cart or wagon, urged quickly up a hill. He used to remark, that "Unmerciful men drive the creatures up hill so as to deprive them of breath! They act as though they wished to choke the poor horses!" He never allowed a horse that had served him for years to die of hunger, or by the hand of cruelty. The stable and the grass-field were left open, perpetually, as the rich domain of the enfeebled animal. "A faithful servant," he remarked, "should not be cast off, or deserted, when rendered helpless by age."

This humane spirit not only secured his cattle from unmerciful treatment, but it spread its fostering wings over the feathered tribes which traversed his farmyard. He once met a servant-maid, with some oats on a dish, in order to decoy a hen to the house, where she might catch and kill her. "What!" said the Doctor, when he understood the maneuver, "you are endeavoring to *deceive* that innocent and unsuspecting fowl! No! she must not be deceived —give her fair play!" He caused the maid to lay

His Credulity.

down the oats, and left her to capture the victim otherwise.

4. *His credulity.*

There are few who avoided extremes more than did Dr. Carson. One of his favorite sayings was, that "Man can never be kept from extremes." But, in *some things*, he was a living confirmation of the fact that extremes could meet, even in *one man*! For when receiving testimony which related to divine things, he was the most cautious and incredulous being on earth. He received not, implicitly, the assertions of fathers, popes, or councils. The prophets, the apostles, and self-evident truth were with him the only vouchers. In fact, he distrusted and often questioned his own judgment. It was only when God spoke that his credence was plenary—his faith was mighty. But strange as it may seem, it is a fact that persons of the weakest capacity played tricks upon the perspicacious critic. The servant-maids often showed their ingenuity by changing the hands on the dial of the house-clock, when they wished to postpone the hour at which they were expected to have breakfast, or dinner, prepared. Sometimes, when he thought that the laborers on his farm might feel anxious for their breakfast, he looked at his watch and compared it with the clock, then asked some one to ac-

He was Unsuspicious—The Household Disaster.

count for the discrepancy. “Do tell me,” he used to say, “what is the matter with my watch—or is that clock right? Why, my watch was to a moment according to the clock last night, and now it is forty minutes faster!” Then, without the remotest idea of suspecting the tricky servants, he turned away, saying, “I fear those poor men will feel hungry.”

“To the pure all things are pure,” was certainly exemplified by this unsuspecting, high-principled man. He treated all men as truthful, and honest, and sincere, until convicted of the contrary. Another instance of this must be chronicled: One of the maids, through some mishap, broke a great deal of delf—plates, cups, and saucers—and in order to conceal the household disaster from the eyes of the master (as her mistress, of course, like all mistresses, knew the secret), she cast the fragments on a distant part of the premises. But the Doctor, in one of his healthful, domestic rambles, stumbled on them. The moment he returned to the house, he called for Mrs. Carson, and said, “My dear, I want to tell you how sorry I feel for the poor female peddler, who must have fallen in one of my fields, for there is a great deal of delf broken and scattered. How unfortunate the poor woman has been! No doubt it was all the property the creature had!”

His Assiduity, Economy, and Accuracy.

Little did the indubious man think that the pitied peddler was his own servant, or that the smash occurred in his own pantry! Mrs. Carson and those who possessed the secret with great difficulty preserved their gravity.

5. *His assiduity, economy, and accuracy.*

“*Neither lose a moment nor a crumb*” was Dr. Carson’s motto. He was an early riser, and he often resumed his studies after family worship, long after the clock had struck ten at night. During fifty or sixty years he was never known to have spent an idle day.* He husbanded every thing. When at home he invariably read some Greek, and often Hebrew, every day; and of every thing worth remembering he always took notes. To save paper he stitched the covers of old letters, etc., together, upon which he deposited fugitive thoughts, brief quotations, and incidental remarks. He entertained no respect for slothful or lazy persons. He wished to see a man, whether at the plow, the anvil, or in the study, working with *all* his might.

His love for knowledge caused him to employ others to read when his own strength, in the latter part of the day, became exhausted. His wife, his sons, and daughters, and familiar visitors were all taxed. One of his pupils once ventured to test his

* See Appendix, B.

Engaged Others to Read—His Patience Tested—Extensive Knowledge.

patience, by reading Warburton's Divine Legation to him five hours and a quarter successively. The subject was obscure and prosy—it was monotonous enough to set a world asleep; but, avaricious of knowledge, the critic was far from being satiated. In fact, he was not even satisfied. I believe he would have listened five additional hours. With him there was nothing but reading, reading—ever reading. And he read not for the sake of reading; he pondered and treasured *all* he read. No miser ever hoarded his silver and gold with greater tenacity than did this man that which he prized above all things material. His memory was a tablet, it allowed no impression to escape. He could at any moment mention the name, the country, the career, and the fate of every king and emperor, hero, historian, poet, and philosopher of whom any record has been made in the civilized world. Not only was he acquainted with the royalty and nobility of the British empire of past centuries, but, I believe, he could speak the *family name* of every one of them. The factitious title of a duke, an earl, or a lord never deprived this diligent and retentive reader of the abjured name which formed a clue to his parentage. With the names of the so-called fathers, and with the decrees of ecclesiastical councils, and with the various forms of secular dynas-

His Knowledge of History—Desire for Knowledge.

ties, he was almost as familiar as with the English alphabet.

But lest these statements should be considered either hyperbolical, or incredible, one confirmatory instance will be adduced: Having discovered the Doctor's thorough, and even minute acquaintance with a part of ancient history, on which he had examined the writer and others—with which, in fact, he seemed more familiar than did those whose immediate object of study it then formed, I ventured, without a why or a wherefore, to inquire when had he been a student in that department. “I have not read that history,” said he, “for the last fifty years.” In silent astonishment the inquirer turned away, fully despairing of ever becoming an historian.

But that which is yet more astonishing is, that he could instantaneously give the derivation and definition of words and technical terms which could not be found either in English or Latin dictionaries, Greek or Hebrew lexicons. His knowledge appeared as intuitive as it was universal. And strange as it may appear, much knowledge as he had, he was, to the last, desirous of having more. Even in his sixty-seventh year he relaxed not his energies; whereas thousands, at that time of life, would have taken their ease, had they only a tithe of the interest of his capital. A few months before

What he wished to Bequeath—When and how he Wrote.

his decease, when conversing privately on the great importance of every Christian, and *especially of every minister*, adding to his faith knowledge, he expressed regret that when he would be quitting this world he could not bequeath to others, referring more especially to a son who was then studying for the ministry, that which cost him so much labor.

He spent his summers in reading and traveling, and wrote during the winter and spring of each year. He only wrote a few hours at each time, and yet he dashed off from twelve to twenty pages at a sitting. When sallying from his desk to inhale the mountain air, he often said, "I could not continue writing any longer; God does not require more of us than we are able to do." When he went to write he was fully equipped: he was a furious quill-driver. The best pen ever taken from the wing even of the king of birds could live only a moment in his hand! Its loud tearing and scraping created a sort of erratic music. He sometimes deposited three letters for a polysyllable, and left his readers to guess the remainder. I believe he seldom revised; and when he did, it was only to make certainty doubly certain. In order to gratify an inquiring pupil, he once suffered me to extort from him the fact, that the best articles he had written were sent unread, and even wet, to the

Inferior in some Things—In Others he Exceeded.

press. Thus it will be seen that in the *accuracy* with which he wrote he equaled the renowned Dr. Samuel Johnson, and that in the *speed* with which he wrote he far surpassed the great lexicographer.

6. *Things in which he was inferior, and things in which he excelled.*

In some things he was inferior to many of his cotemporaries. Robert Hall eclipsed him as an orator; Dr. Chalmers was infinitely his superior in discursive fancy and brilliancy of imagination; and both William Greenfield and Dr. Adam Clarke were his superiors as mere linguists. But when those men are placed by his side as philologists, metaphysicians, logicians, or hermeneutical theologians, they absolutely become almost nonentities. The writings of all, if fairly investigated and impartially judged, will show whether or not, by this statement, the judgment of the biographer is at fault. In those things for which Chalmers, and Hall, and Clarke were distinguished, perhaps they have not had, in any age, a superior. And so it was with the man of whom I write; for although he may have been equaled by the great Jonathan Edwards, as a logical, metaphysical reasoner, it is very certain that he was Edwards' superior in philology and universal scholarship.

The Terms "Good" and "Bad" used indefinitely.

CHAPTER XI.

The Spirit exemplified by Dr. Carson in all his Writings and Ministrations—A bad and good Spirit defined—To which Class does he belong—Testimony of a London Reviewer—The Manner in which he repelled the Charge—His only Wish for his Enemies—He never wielded the Sword of Personal Revenge—Nothing Uncandid, Envious, or Revengeful in his Ministrations or Writings—He never Disputed—He loved Peace—Charge of Dogmatism shown to be Unfounded—Extract from Coleridge—Dr. Carson's Spirit was positively and negatively Good—All who advocate Truth bound to expose either the Ignorance or Hypocrisy of those who support Error—Ignorance more easily Detected than Hypocrisy—What constitutes a Hypocrite—The painful Duty of the Christian Critic—Jay's Testimony—Carson's Boldness—He never Guessed—Not Rash in his Interpretations—His Self-denial and Love of Truth—His Charity—Never Impeached a Christian with Hypocrisy.

Many who speak of the spirit manifested by ministers of the gospel, attach no definite ideas to the terms *good* and *bad*; whereas we as fully need to be informed what constitutes a good or a bad spirit, as we do to know that which constitutes a true or a

A good and bad Spirit defined—London Reviewer.

false argument. It may not, therefore, be inappropriate on this point to submit a few remarks.

According to the judgment of the writer, that man may be charged as the possessor of a *bad* spirit, whose ministrations are characterized by revenge, envy, anger, duplicity, or equivocation; and the man who, in the pulpit, or through the press, exemplifies boldness, candor, and charity, may be said to possess a good spirit. Now, let us inquire to which class does Dr. Carson belong. For if he can be justly convicted of a bad spirit, I am not the man, notwithstanding my love and veneration for his memory, either to offer an apology, or publish a defense. Here I shall quote the testimony of a London reviewer.

“ But though the pointed character of the author’s style, and the home-thrusts which he gives may be mistaken by the superficial for indications of ‘a bad spirit,’ it is rare to meet with a controversial writer so thoroughly free from that evil. A bad spirit is displayed when a writer misrepresents his opponent’s language, imputes to him a worse meaning than his words naturally suggest, ascribes to him motives by which there is no reason to suppose that he is actuated, or evinces toward him any kind of ill-will. But a man is not to be accounted an enemy because he tells unpalatable truths, and exposes in-

He wished his Enemies in Heaven—His Prayer.

genious sophisms. In Dr. Carson's pages we do not perceive any malignity or unfairness, though there are expressions of conscious superiority, and an unsparing exposure of philological or argumentative weakness."

When considering the charges urged by some of his opponents against the spirit of his writings he calmly replied, "These things never move me. I write for eternity. I serve the Lord Jesus, and expect a crown from Him." He never returned railing for railing. The worst wish which his heart avowedly cherished for his most inveterate opponent was the blessing of God and a place in the world of happiness. The only fire which he invoked Heaven to pour upon his enemies was that of the Holy Spirit, by which their enmity might be consumed, their darkness dispelled, and their coldness turned to ardor. Carson knew how to contend for the faith with the sword of the Spirit, but he knew not how to wield the sword of personal revenge. He was as much a child with the one as a giant with the other. The prayer of his Lord was by adoption his—"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

Do the writings of Dr. Carson manifest a want of candor, or do they exemplify a spirit of duplicity or equivocation? To multitudes such questions will be superfluous, for it is well known that he shrunk

His Candor—Hated Sophistry—Never Disputed—Loved Peace.

not from acknowledging an obliquity or a difficulty, however mortifying to himself and friends, or however gratifying to his opponents. His magnanimous soul believed that neither Christ nor Christianity required to be defended by sophistry or false argument. He knew no man and no system after the flesh. His heart was devoid of all sectarianism. Truth was his treasure: for it he lived, and for it I believe he would have died. His strictures on Dr. Gill and John Milton are as unsparing, according to their deserts, as those with which he taxed the productions of Paedo-Baptist writers. If Benedict, the indefatigable historian, had not in his history of the Baptists justified Carson's strongest terms, I would place them before my readers and ask, "Where is the envy or the anger?" All his movements, in fact, whether in the church or the world, in the family or the recitation-room, were governed by equanimity. He had no respect for the tribes of carpers and cavilers who infest Zion. He loved the spirit of meekness, peace, and gentleness so well that he could neither chafe nor be chafed by wrangling. He invariably deserted the scene of debate. He never argued. His abode was the habitation of peace, and he continually wooed "the spirit of peace." Shade of the departed, how much I revere thy gentle spirit!

Charge of Dogmatism denied—How he defended Truth.

But these are not the only charges alleged against his writings. Some of his timid or weak-minded friends have believed the libelous epithet, "dogmatical," as applied to them by some of his opponents. Well, those who are so unkind as to charge Dr. Carson with dogmatism, must either be willing that their readers shall continue ignorant, or they themselves are ignorant of that which constitutes dogmatism. In strict propriety, the opprobrious epithet can be applied only to the productions of the ignorant, the superstitious, the vain, and the obstinate. When ignorance, hypocrisy, or superstition, conjoined to vanity, oppose truth, or defend error, then is dogmatism exemplified.

Dr. Carson's dogmatism was a grasping, scathing, crushing logic, a philosophy the most profound, and a metaphysical acuteness which detected, exposed, and embarrassed the enemies of truth. He hated error, and he fearlessly exposed it; he loved truth, and boldly defended it. When he states a fact he supports it, not by sheer assertion or by supplicating arguments, but by irresistible axioms. The king of the forest never whines; conscious of the majesty of his strength, the lion roars! Such a man required neither anger, nor craft, nor dogmatism. Well might he have exclaimed, with Coleridge, "Would that the verdict

Quotation from Coleridge—Why Dr. Carson has been Accused.

to be passed on my labors depended on those who least needed them. The water-lily in the midst of water lifts its broad leaves and expands its petals at the first patterning of the shower, and rejoices in the rain with a quicker sympathy than the parched shrub in the sandy desert."

It is not sufficient, however, to prove that Dr. Carson never exemplified a bad spirit; for, in order to behold a full portraiture of the man, all need to be told that his spirit was positively as well as negatively good. Had he never exercised any of the daring and active virtues, he never would have been assailed. A quiescent spirit is considered, by the multitude, an amiable, or, at least, a harmless spirit. Have we not seen and heard of thousands of ministers of whom the crowd never speak except in terms of laudation? In fact there are very many of whose spirit it is impossible to predicate either good or bad. There is a spirit frequently developed in the pulpit, and through the press, which is literally neither really bad nor really good. If John the Baptist had not condemned Herod he could have retained his freedom and his head, and perhaps have secured an invitation to the banquet.

But before proceeding it seems necessary to remark, that there are but two alternatives left the man who defends truth or assails error. He is

Hypocrisy described—Difficulties of a Critic—Jay's Remark.

bound to convict his opponent either of ignorance or of hypocrisy. For, although a man can not be a hypocrite without knowledge, still he may be ignorant without being a hypocrite. An ignorant man can only advocate error, whereas a hypocrite may, when it suits his purpose, defend the one or oppose the other. Nothing can, therefore, be more evident than that it is more difficult to discover hypocrisy than to detect ignorance.

It is impossible to imagine any thing more trying than the duty of the Christian critic. Fidelity to Christ and his love for truth induce him, however repugnant to his nature, always to expose the ignorance, sophistry, or incompetency of those who oppose the laws of God. Perhaps there is not a more severe test of the faithfulness and charity of a minister of the gospel than that of defending truth or exposing error. How difficult it is for one who possesses the finer sensibilities of nature to charge ignorance, or incapacity, upon a beloved friend, or even on a respected citizen! For, as Jay says, "There is nothing of which men are so proud as their knowledge. There are more than few who would rather be charged with a want of principle than a want of understanding." Like Paul, Dr. Carson often besought the prayers of the church that he might both speak and write the

He never Guessed—Not Impulsive—Great Boldness.

truth boldly. His boldness, however, was not that of rashness or assumption. He invariably declined expressing his opinion unless he could do it explicitly and confidently. *He never guessed!* There was no vacillation about his statements, and there was no conjecture about his interpretations. He was asked many questions which any man but a Carson would have attempted to answer. And if his writings contain strong terms, as well as strong arguments, the following quotation from them will prove that he was not the creature of impulse, or unholy passion, but the obedient servant of a faithful conscience: "Persons," he says, "who think that reverence for God and His Word ought to forbid us to use this boldness of speech would do well to take a lesson from the Scriptures. Why should we indulge a sickly repugnance to that mode of expressing truth which revelation has so fully sanctioned."

What boldness and determination the man possessed who taught truths for which he knew he should sacrifice fame, and friends, and affluence! Truths for which he had to embrace poverty, and reproach, and hatred! If an angel had visited our world in order to subvert the faith, or to change the ordinances of Christ, neither his shining robes, nor his pretended delegation, could have

All his Writings develop a Spirit of Charity.

saved him, in Carson's vicinity, from the fate of Agag ; for he neither "feared the people nor obeyed their voice," when God was to be honored and His truth defended. "The bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen" were never heard around his habitation. Lord, let a shred of his mantle fall upon thy servant.

All his writings develop a spirit of charity.

He writes—"Christians of every denomination I love, and I will never, I hope, withhold my hand or my countenance from any who, after impartial investigation, conscientiously differ from me. I can from my heart say, 'Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth.' Pity, indeed, while there are so few friends of Jesus, that those should harbor hard thoughts of each other for conscientious differences. But let it not be expected from this, that I shall 'know any man according to the flesh,' or avoid freely censuring whatever I judge unfounded in Scripture, out of compliment to any friend who may countenance it. This would be to 'walk as men.'"

His genius and erudition cease to astonish us when we contemplate the benevolence of his heart. Learning and talent may attract our esteem and admiration, but devoid of charity their possessor can never be endeared to us. We may fear or ad-

Charity exemplified—Never accused a Christian with Hypocrisy.

mire such a man, but we can not love him. And of all writers, none, I presume, have had more powerful and frequent temptations to be uncharitable than this author. But notwithstanding the fact that men of almost all nations, and of almost all denominations, were opposed to him, still he invariably cast the mantle of charity over all Christians. He once called my attention to a book which he was refuting. He read a paragraph and exclaimed, “Is it not hard to believe that the author of such arguments is a Christian? Let us not, however, be rash in judging, for many of God’s children are blinded and spell-bound by prejudice.” He always hoped and believed the best of all who professed to be the subjects of his Lord. So long as there was the least evidence of their sincerity, he neither questioned their motives nor denounced them as hypocrites. His spirit could not brand with hypocrisy those who retained the lowest claim to a place among the brotherhood; for, with him, hypocrite and murderer were almost synonymous. And, although he exposed when he could not instruct, and shamed when he could not convince, and rebuked when he could not reform, yet all proceeded from his sense of duty, and was governed by his deep-rooted charity.*

* See Appendix, C.

Identified with Religious Movements in England.

CHAPTER XII.

He was Identified with Missionary Movements in England and Ireland—His Heart essentially Missionary—His Church a Missionary Body—His last Mission and last Sermon—Fatal Accident—Commentary on Providence—God a great God—Prefixed the Possessive Pronoun “My” when Talking of God—Dying Words—His Opinion of Christ’s Almighty Power—His last Sabbath—Christians the best Consolers in the Hour of Death—Humility essential to Usefulness—Wishes the Enlargement and Prosperity of Zion—Love of the Promises—Afflictions and Deliverances—Conclusion.

FOR some years before his death he was identified with the movements of our denomination in England. I think he visited London annually, and spoke at the anniversaries. He was consulted about the best means of extending the cause of truth in Ireland, etc., etc. President Crisp, of our college at Bristol, often received students on his recommendation; and the Rev. Micah Thomas, principal of a theological institution in Wales, was one of his regular correspondents.

Dr. Carson’s heart was essentially missionary.

Himself and Church were Missionaries—Last Mission.

All his energies were fully and constantly exerted in propelling the chariot of the gospel, and he trained his church to labor as a missionary society. He called upon every member to "build the wall before his own house." He had them every Sabbath evening scattered over the country, preaching, exhorting, and praying.

He accepted an invitation, in the summer of 1844, from the Baptist Missionary Society, to take a tour on their behalf through Wales and some parts of England. His reception was everywhere cordial, and his appeals on behalf of the heathen were successful. This was his last mission. A note, published in the Baptist Reporter of November, 1844, will show how our English friends prized Dr. Carson's visits, and tells where he preached his last sermon. The writer says :

"Allow me to correct an error in your Reporter for October. It is very probable that Dr. Carson took breakfast with the Rev. W. G. Lewis, of Cheltenham, but it was *not* on the morning of the fatal accident, nor was it the last place he visited. The correct account respecting this circumstance is as follows: He arrived by train from Cheltenham at Pershore on the morning of Thursday, August 15th, and spent the day with us, and gave us an address in the evening, *in his usual style*, founding

His last Sermon—Fatal Accident at Liverpool.

his remarks on those solemn words in Mark viii. 36, 37, after which he supped with our esteemed pastor, Mr. Overbury, slept at the house of Mr. S. Cann, one of our deacons, breakfasted with him, and left Pershore early on the morning of Friday, by train to Liverpool, on his way to Ireland. Pershore, then, was the *last* place he visited, and at Pershore he delivered his *last* address.

“W. S.”

When returning home he seems to have entered Liverpool stealthily, lest any of the brethren there should prevail on him to spend another Sabbath away from the loved people of his charge. To this anxiety it is presumed may be, indirectly, ascribed his fatal accident. Truly

“God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform!”

While awaiting the hour when the steamship for Belfast would sail, he continued his meditations, and at the same time indulged his wonted exercise of walking. When one of the Liverpool clocks tolled he looked at his watch, but having been unconsciously too near the dock, stumbled, and fell into the water, where it was twenty-five feet deep. A man, who happened to be present at the time with a ladder, lowered it, and rescued him. His shoulder, which was dislocated by the fall, was set,

Illness and Death—Commentary on Providence.

and, according to previous arrangement, he became a passenger in the first vessel which left for Ireland. The voyage from Liverpool, however, was unusually long, and although he slumbered most of the time, still the dislocation of his shoulder made him feverish. When he reached Belfast he sent for the Baptist minister, Rev. Robert Wilson, and went to that good brother's house. Some of the resident physicians were called to see him, and his son and son-in-law, Drs. Carson and Clarke, were sent for to Coleraine. Every thing that Christian kindness and the very best medical skill could do for his recovery were lavished upon him. But all in vain. He had to go, that he might receive that which he often termed "the reward of grace." On Saturday, the 24th of August, eight days after he reached Ireland, he slept in Jesus. In expressing his unbounded gratitude to God for having almost miraculously interposed in the moment of peril, he said, "Many a line have I written on Providence, but in my preservation I see the hand of God in a manner in which I never did before. How strange that a ladder should have been provided in readiness to put down just at the moment of my fall! The Lord is God indeed! He is a great God and a good God! He is the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, and he is my

Gratitude to God—Christ almighty—Confidence in Prayer.

God!" It may be well to remark, that when talking of God he usually employed the possessive pronoun *my* as the most fitting term by which he could appropriate the Being whom he feared, loved, and obeyed. He talked not of his God as an abstract thing, or as an alienated deity, but as "*my God*, to whom I am indebted for the gift of His Son—to whom I owe my redemption, adoption, and hope of eternal life." When relieved of a violent pain in his side, he thus expressed his gratitude, not to his physician, but to the Being who only could make the remedy effectual. "Thank God," said he, "that I am eased from that pain! How good He is in affording such relief! What a blessing is freedom from pain! What helpless creatures we are! We can do nothing; we are crushed before the moth; *but the Lord Jesus can do every thing—every thing in heaven and on earth.*"

On the last Sabbath which he spent in this world he had fellowship with the little church of which Mr. Wilson was pastor. They joined the Doctor in commemorating the Lord's death, by observing the Lord's Supper in Mr. Wilson's house. When asking their united prayers on his behalf he said, "God will not deny the request of His own people." Confidence in the efficacy of prayer characterized him throughout life. Having been refreshed

Christian Companions—Humility essential to Usefulness.

by his intercourse with the Lord Jesus and the portion of the redeemed who gathered around his dying couch, he exclaimed, “What a blessed thing it is to have the society of Christians in the time of affliction! They know how to console, and they only. The nearest earthly relative who is unacquainted with the Saviour, can give no consolation.” He often commented on the words which record the way in which primitive Christians lived : “Walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied.” He talked also much about Christian humility. Throughout life he not only reproved pride by his humility, and rebuked vanity by exposure and recorded censure, but on his dying bed he declared humility essential to the usefulness of all Christians, but more especially to ministers of the gospel. “*A man's usefulness,*” he said, “*expires when he loses humility.*”

The nearer he approached heaven the more he talked of the welfare of the militant church. He referred to the passages, “The knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth,” etc., etc., and to Isaiah xlix., remarking, with marked satisfaction, “The number of converts being so great, Zion asks in astonishment, ‘Who hath begotten me these?’” He often requested the brethren who were favored

Loved the Promises—Attests God's Faithfulness.

by his dying counsel to read some of the precious promises to him. "Read me some of the promises," he sometimes said; "they are my only support; they are the food I want." The language of Paul, "To depart and be with Christ, which is far better," and Psalm xlivi. 5, together with the declaration that "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all," were frequently on his lips. On the last passage he dwelt with great complacency; and with gratitude, which bordered on ecstasy, he exclaimed, "*To this truth I can certainly set my seal. Through many trials my way has lain, but the Lord has delivered me out of them all!*"

Much as he was afflicted, he prayed much, and had all around him to present supplications on his behalf. Before taking the food prescribed by his physicians, he asked Mr. Wilson, the good brother at whose house he lay, to kneel down and ask God to bless it. He was anxious to live that he might expose some of the most imposing but dangerous errors which were then warmly advocated by many, so he wished for God's special blessing on the means used for his restoration. On one occasion, when praying, he held up his hand, as did Moses, and when it became weary, he requested one of his attendants to support it. This world had no

His Grave unmarked—His Writings his Memorial.

charms for him after Mrs. Carson's death. He desired life only because of his love to Christ and His kingdom.

“Servant of Christ, well done!
Rest from thy loved employ—
The battle fought, the victory won,
Enter thy Master's joy.”

Thus ended the career of one whose name and deeds of daring shall outlive time. The rural graveyard at Desert Martin, in the vicinity of Tubbermore, contains all of him that died. The lovers of worldly genius and of sanguinary valor usually honor the urns of those whom they admire, whereas this man's grave is marked by no towering monument—by no granite column. But he needs them not; no, he needs them not! His mind lives! His writings are his memorial!* May the writer and his readers be stimulated by his example, encouraged by his triumphs, and finally, with him, receive a place at God's right hand, to praise the Lamb forever and ever.

* See Appendix, D.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A.

MR. CARSON's note bears date:

"NEW YORK, June 1st, 1850.

"REV. G. C. MOORE:

"MY DEAR FRIEND—I am glad you are progressing with spirit in writing the life of my grandfather. I have taken up my pen to inform you of a fact in the life of this venerable parent, of which you may not have been informed. I have heard it remarked by some that it was strange his works were not more voluminous, as they understood that a great part of his time was devoted to writing. But they are ignorant of the fact that for many years he assisted his friend, the late Robert Haldane, Esq., of Edinburgh, in writing his Evidences of Christianity, his Commentary on the Romans. and other works. I have myself, when but a boy, posted many a quire of manuscript sent from Tubbermore to Mr. Haldane.

"Delicacy has prevented my grandfather's family, since he died, from making these facts known; and I have heard it urged as a reason for not doing so, that he would not divulge it. This, I doubt not, is true; for he often said with regard to this matter, '*It makes no difference how or in whose name my writings are published, if Christ be honored.*' But I do not think that this is any reason why *you* should not make it known; for in writing his life you should know no man after the flesh.

"I remain, dear sir, yours in the Lord,

"JOSEPH D. CARSON.

"P. S.—Other and stronger testimony can be given, if necessary."

On the aid rendered by Dr. Carson to others the late A. K. Miller, Esq., has well written:

"It appears to me that the friends of evangelical religion at large are deeply indebted to Dr. Carson, how tardy soever they may be in making the acknowledgment. Other men, of

far inferior caliber, have had their honors heaped upon them; but do I speak more than the words of truth and soberness when I say that here is a man who has advanced every subject on which he has written, and who, in some respects, is in advance of the age in which he lives—here is a man, a mere shred of whose capital has made some men of small means great, and some really great men greater still, himself all the while more unassuming than his fellows."

APPENDIX B.

Dr. Maclay writes:

"Dr. Carson graduated at the University of Glasgow, and took the highest honors of that institution. Dr. Wardlaw was a fellow-student, and graduated at the same time. He has been a close student ever since, and has bestowed more attention on the subject of philology than perhaps any other man now living. He was remarkably industrious in giving to the world the fruit of his studies. For many years he published one volume every year upon some literary or religious subject, besides pamphlets adapted for special occasions.

"On my last visit to Ireland I spent three days with him, and had much interesting conversation on various religious subjects. His wife remarked to me that when at home he had not been *three days out of his study for forty years before*. He was considered by competent judges to be one of the best scholars of the age, and as a philologist and Scriptural critic to have no superior."

APPENDIX C.

Concerning the spirit manifested by Dr. Carson, the following are quoted as corroborative testimony. Professor Wilson, of the Royal College of Belfast, in his book called "Infant Baptism a Scriptural Service," writes:

"I have considered it my special duty to make special reference to the opposing view as advocated with characteristic power and acumen in Dr. Carson's work on Baptism. As a specimen of masterly criticism and forcible argument that work possesses merit of a very high order.

"It is contrary alike to my intentions and my feelings if these pages contain a single expression inconsistent with sincere respect for Dr. Carson's talents and acquirements as an author, and his eminent worth as a Christian man."

A Congregational missionary, the Rev. T. O'Connor, wrote me thus, a few months ago :

"I shall, at as early a day as I can, send you all I can bring to mind of the sayings, etc., of our dear lamented friend, Dr. Carson. Oh! the recollection of the days and weeks which I spent under the hospitable roof of that great and good man can never be effaced from my mind! He was the type of apostolic purity and simplicity."

Dr. Maclay's testimony in this matter is :

"Dr. Carson, though one of the best scholars of the age, possessed the *simplicity of a child*, and was one of the kindest-hearted men I ever knew. He was very dear to me. I loved him as a minister and a Christian. His family were lovely. Many may think he was harsh, but he was not so; he was a pattern of mildness and courtesy. He was a man of deep piety and great humility; as a husband and a father, gentle and kind in his family, and as a neighbor observant of the inspired precept, 'As much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men.'

"In several instances he has been employed by the *Presbyterians* to write reviews of important works, both in Scotland and in Ireland—a circumstance at once complimentary to his ability as a scholar, and his integrity as a Christian."

The Coleraine Chronicle, a Pædo-Baptist paper, in its obituary notice of Dr. Carson, says :

"In his writings he was firm, vigorous, and unbending, especially when the truth was to be defended, or error assailed. In the affairs of *private life* he was the *very reverse*; *so much so* that he was most unwilling to be dragged into a *viva voce* discussion with any one. Controversy in private life was contrary to his disposition and feelings; and although some may have charged him with having given an undue preponderance to a few of the doctrines and precepts of Holy Writ, such a charge can not be substantiated. As a proof of this statement the following circumstance will be sufficient. A gentleman was relating to him a conversation that he had had with a Unitarian, who called for the purpose of procuring his signature to a petition in favor of the Dissenters' Chapel Bill. The gentleman called upon, gave a flat and somewhat discourteous answer. Dr. Carson disapproved of the course he had pursued. 'Christianity,' said the distinguished divine, 'demands that we shall give a respectful answer to every man, no matter whether friend or enemy.' Let those who charge him with bigotry think of the principle which dictated that *charitable declaration blush and be forever silent!*'"

APPENDIX D.

Dr. Carson's writings may be classified in the following order:

1. *His Controversial Productions*—which contain critical dissertations on Romanism, Baptism, Unitarianism, the Plenary Inspiration of the Bible, and the Constitution and Government of Christian Churches.

2. *Philological, Scientific, and Philosophical*—Figures of Speech, Biblical Interpretation, and the Burden of Proof.

3. *Theological, Doctrinal, and Practical*—Three books on God's Providence, the Knowledge of Jesus, Miscellanies, Characteristic Style of Scripture, and unpublished Commentaries on Galatians and Hebrews.

The intrinsic value and distinguishing excellence of his writings consist more especially in the *first principles* which they contain. *One first principle* or *axiom* is of greater importance to a learner or an interpreter than ten thousand remarks and observations. In confirmation of this statement a few instances will be given. Dr. Carson, by one of his figures of speech, justifies Paul's "*Less than the least of all saints*," and Milton's "*lowest deep, a lower deep*;" phraseology which all other writers have denominated "extravagant hyperbole," or "perfect absurdities."

The Rev. Dr. Cooke, of Belfast, a celebrated Presbyterian minister, when issuing a revised edition of Brown's Bible, with notes, wrote to Dr. Carson for an interpretation of Rom. iii 27. Carson's dissertation, however, on the difficult text, consisted in a mere reference to a certain principle contained on a certain page in his Treatise on the Figures of Speech!

When giving a summary review of his writings the Primitive Church Magazine, of London, spoke thus:

"The extent and variety of his writings show that he was far from being a man of one subject only, and the aptness, beauty, and diversity of his illustrations manifest him as the man of science as well as the divine. It can not be doubted his familiar acquaintance with the classics, both ancient and modern, enlivened his style of discourse, while his constant study of the sacred volume through the medium of its originals, mellowed and enhanced the truths he taught.

"His most critical and elaborate defense of the Trinity, in reply to Dr. Drummond, will remain a lasting proof of his scholarship and acumen, while his valuable work on the principles of BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION will show his thorough acquaintance with the laws of translation and the principles of philology.

"In the philosophy of language his admirable treatise on the FIGURES OF SPEECH will show *how far in advance of the present age he was in the knowledge of the sources and rules of figurative diction and the elegances of finished composition*. It was no mean commendation of Dr. Thomas Brown (the great philosopher), when he described this treatise as '*a work of no ordinary writer.*'"

As some men, "who, apparently, know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm," and among them Alexander Campbell, of Virginia, have presumed to criticise the style of Dr. Carson's writings, nothing but a want of time, and a desire to preserve that modesty which beseems a *young man*, could have hindered the writer from incorporating a brief dissertation on this subject in the foregoing work. Shall *such men* undertake to criticise the productions of *Alexander Carson!* It is an absolute certainty that those things which they denominate "*imperfections*" he has both rhetorically and philosophically *proved* to be *perfections!* and those things which they pronounce "*elegances*" he has demonstrably condemned as blemishes! Certainly the next offense, from whatever quarter, shall not be committed with impunity.

On the perspicuity of his style a London reviewer* remarks :

"Dr. Carson possesses the power of expressing himself clearly in great perfection. His sentences are generally short and pointed, and his illustrations are original and striking."

In addition to the above testimony I will merely remark that his style discards all grammatical parentheses. This may be affirmed, at least, of all he wrote during the twenty-five years which preceded his decease. He teaches in one of his works, that "Parenthesis, except when it is figurative, can seldom find admission into elegant composition. It is," he says, "usually the clumsy resource of those who want skill to express their thoughts with order. When frequent and long it is an enemy to perspicuity and every perfection of style."

By the occasional violation of his own rule, the Doctor's early productions may be easily detected or separated from those which are modern.

When Archbishop Whately's "Elements of Rhetoric" were read in his presence, he said, "I am glad you have taken Whately before me; I shall have to take him down on many points. I must expose him a great deal." At that time he was preparing a revised edition of his "Figures of Speech," in which he intended to insert some strictures on Whately's rules and general productions.

* London Baptist Magazine, 1844.

This element of perspicuity, I think, may be denominated a distinguishing peculiarity of Dr. Carson's style, as I know of no writer who is so free from the fault which his rule condemns; for although good writers at present secure their pages against this blemish, still they do so merely by substituting commas for the curved lines, and

"It is a poor relief we gain,
To change the place but not the pain."

RECOMMENDATIONS.

From the Rev. William R. Williams, D. D.

NEW YORK, March 4th, 1850.

THE subscriber has learned with pleasure, that the Rev. G. C. Moore is about to issue a memoir of that very able and excellent man, the late Rev. Dr. Carson, of Ireland. To a mind of singular energy and acuteness, and great attainments as a philologist, and expositor of Holy Scripture, he united true and high piety. Our Brother Moore's advantages from having spent some two years as a student in the family, and enjoyed the friendly regards of Dr. Carson, must give his sketch and testimony of and to his revered instructor much interest.

WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS.

From the Rev. John Dowling, D. D.

NEW YORK, March 30th, 1850.

I am happy to learn that my friend the Rev. G. C. Moore, from Ireland, is about to publish a memoir of the late Rev. Dr. Carson, of Tubbermore. I have long wondered that a life of this eminent Baptist, distinguished scholar, and godly man, had not before been given to the public, either in England or America. The Rev. William Jones, the author of the Ecclesiastical History, had intended to prepare such a memoir, and would probably have done so had his life been spared a few years longer. Mr. Moore possesses the advantage of having been an inmate of Dr. Carson's family as a student of theology for the two years preceding, and up to the time of his death. I have read a portion of the manuscript, and judging from that as a specimen, I have no doubt that Brother Moore will make an interesting and valuable work.

J. DOWLING.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

From Mrs. Hanna, Dr Carson's daughter.

NEW YORK, April 3d, 1850.

REV. G. C. MOORE :

My highly esteemed friend and brother—I can not express to you the pleasure it gives me to hear that you purpose to write a memoir of my late revered father. Oh! how sorry I have often felt since the death of that devoted and excellent servant of God, the late Rev. William Jones, that there was no one else who would see it his duty to undertake such a task. Now, Mr. Moore, do not think I intend to flatter you, when I say that I believe you are just the person to take it up—you, who so long resided under his roof, and enjoyed his unbounded confidence. * * *

MATILDA HANNA.

Mrs. Hanna's opinion of the work.

June 20, 1850.

* * * Mr. Moore has faithfully, forcibly, and clearly, and without exaggeration or partiality, delineated my revered father's character. I have had the satisfaction of reading the manuscript, and the perusal of it has given me *real pleasure*. I most anxiously wish it all the success it merits.

MATILDA HANNA.

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